

Herculean Labours

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Fig. 1. Two images of St. Jerome: the cardinal who teaches Christendom and the solitary penitent. From the opening page of a manuscript collection of Jerome's letters completed in 1444. Courtesy of the Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, 12. Aug. fol., 1r.

Herculean Labours

Erasmus and the Editing of
St. Jerome's Letters in the Renaissance

By

Hilmar M. Pabel



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On the cover: Desiderius Erasmus by Hans Holbein the Younger. Private Collection. Photograph: Photographic Survey, Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

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carissimae coniugi canonistaeque clarissimae

Lynda

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At times the research for and the writing of this book seemed like an Herculean labour. Simply lifting the many folio tomes that contained Jerome's letters, especially the massive one-volume edition printed by Peter Schoeffer in Mainz in 1470, required more upper-body strength than I am used to expending. Unlike Erasmus, however, I make no pretense to promote myself as Herculean. The mythic strong man worked alone, accomplishing his labours by dint of his own strength and resourcefulness. I had the good fortune of relying on the help of others, more than I can name here, to bring this book to a conclusion.

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editor of Jerome, provided me with important references to scholarly literature, and read the book's first chapter. I decided to spare him reading a draft of the entire book with the hope that he would be more pleased with the final version.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Allen	<i>Opus epistolarum Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami</i> , 12 vols., ed. P. S. Allen, H. M. Allen, and H. W. Garrod (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906-1958). References are to volume, page, and epistle numbers.
ASD	<i>Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami</i> , ed. C. Reedijk et al. (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company/Elsevier, 1969—).
BAV	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.
Beinecke	Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT.
BHM	Bernard Lambert, ed., <i>Bibliotheca Hieronymiana Manuscripta: La tradition manuscrite des oeuvres de Saint Jérôme</i> , 4 vols. in 6 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969-1972).
BML	Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence.
BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.
BSB	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.
Cambridge UL	Cambridge University Library.
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</i> . Tournhout: Brepols, 1953—.
CEBR	<i>Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation</i> , 3 vols., ed. Peter G. Bietenholz and Thomas B. Deutscher (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985-1987).
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> . Vienna, 1866—.
CWE	<i>Collected Works of Erasmus</i> (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974—). References to Erasmus' correspondence are to volume, page, and epistle numbers.
GW	<i>Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke</i> , 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1968—).
Hain	Ludwig Hain, <i>Repertorium bibliographicum in quo libri omnes ab arte typographica inventa usque ad annum MD.</i>

- typis expressi ordine alphabetico vel simpliciter enumerantur vel adcuratius recensentur*, 2 vols. in 4 (1826-1838; repr., Milan: Görlich Editore, 1948).
- HAB Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel.
- Houghton Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- LB *Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami opera omnia*, 10 vols. in 11, ed. J. Leclerc (1703-1706; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2001).
- LMU Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.
- Opera* (1516) *Omnium operum divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis tomus primus [-nonus]*, ed. Erasmus of Rotterdam (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516).
- PCE Peter Canisius, *Beati Petri Canisii Societatis Iesu epistulae et acta*, 8 vols., ed. Otto Braunsberger (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1896-1923).
- RSV Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version.
- PL *Patrologiae cursus completus...series latina*, 221 vols., ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: 1844-1855).
- WA Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 61 vols. (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1883-1983).

NOTE ON REFERENCES

I often availed myself of the English translations in CWE. When I disagreed with them, I translated Erasmus' Latin and referred only to the source of the Latin text, usually Allen. In a few places, I explicitly registered my disagreement. I used the edition (in Latin) of Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi* in *Erasmi Opuscula*, ed. Wallace K. Ferguson, instead of the translation in CWE 61 because all the other lives of Jerome that I cited were available only in Latin. Some incunabular editions of Jerome's *Epistolae* that I consulted, notably the *editio princeps* edited by Teodoro de' Lelli and the editions of Giovanni Andrea Bussi and Peter Schoeffer, came without printed signatures or folio numbers. When I cited these, I did not provide specific references in footnotes. Readers who wish to check my references will be able to locate them from the descriptions that I provide in my text. References to Jerome's correspondence are to the numbering of Isidore Hilberg in CSEL. As a rule, when discussing Jerome's writings in the context of Renaissance editions, I provided references to his works in CSEL, CCSL, or PL since these editions are more accessible. In referring to the Psalms, I always used, as is common today, the numbering in accordance with the Hebrew Bible, not that of the Septuagint or Vulgate, even though editions of Jerome's letters used the latter system. Like Eugene Rice in his *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, by Renaissance I mean the period of European history between 1400 and 1600.

INTRODUCTION

With the publication in Paris in 1500 of his first collection of proverbs, the *Adagiorum collectanea*, Erasmus of Rotterdam began a long editorial career. His death in July 1536 put an end to his editorial work, but the fruits of his labours cheated death. His edition of a Latin translation of the eminent but controversial third-century Greek Church Father Origen appeared in print in Basel in September 1536. Erasmus produced his first edition of an ancient author when he published Cicero's *De officiis* in Paris in 1501. Translations of Lucian, Euripides, and Plutarch, as well as an edition of Lorenzo Valla's *Annotations on the New Testament* (1505) followed between 1501 and his arrival in Basel in August 1514, when he first met Johann Froben. Froben was the junior and surviving partner of the distinguished Basel printer Johann Amerbach, who had died on Christmas Day 1513.

Erasmus and Froben began their famous partnership immediately. In August 1514, Froben printed Erasmus' edition of eight Plutarchan *Opuscula*. The next two years consolidated Erasmus' international reputation as an editor. From Froben's presses came in 1515 an expanded edition of the *Adages* and an edition of Seneca. The *Novum instrumentum*, an edition of the Greek text of the New Testament accompanied by a revision of the Latin Vulgate translation to which were appended a long series of annotations, was the first editorial product of 1516. That year's crowning editorial achievement was a nine-volume edition of the works of St. Jerome, Erasmus' favourite Latin Church Father. This was the first Hieronymian *opera omnia* ever to be printed, a "fitting complement" and an intended "companion" to the *Novum instrumentum*.¹ In this case, Erasmus revived a project

¹ John Olin, "Erasmus and the Church Fathers," in Olin, *Six Essays on Erasmus* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 38; Irena Backus, "Erasmus and the Spirituality of the Early Church," in *Erasmus' Vision of the Church* (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1995), 97. For the chronology of editions of authors until 1516, see Jacques Chomarat, *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Érasme*, 2 vols. (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1981), 476-77; on Plutarch see *ibid.*, 1: 472-73.

that Amerbach had initiated but that had become moribund with the printer's death. Erasmus' edition of Jerome's genuine and misattributed letters combined with the edition of the Church Father's biblical commentaries, overseen by Amerbach's sons Bruno, Basil, and Boniface, to form the *opera omnia*.² The letters did not consist of simply familiar correspondence but included what Erasmus called "epistolary books," such as Jerome's polemical treatises and exegetical essays. How Erasmus and other editors arraigned and commented on these letters is the focus of my book.

In 1524, Erasmus sent a portrait of himself (figure 2), painted by Hans Holbein, to Archbishop William Warham of Canterbury, to whom he had dedicated his edition of Jerome's letters and arguably the patron whom he admired the most. The portrait arrived shortly before a copy of the second edition of the letters, recently printed in 1524, reached Warham.³ (Froben printed the remaining volumes of the *opera omnia* in 1525 and 1526.) The portrait and the edition of Jerome are central to Lisa Jardine's argument that Erasmus deftly manipulated the medium of print to vault himself into the firmament of the Renaissance republic of letters as the universal man of letters *par excellence*, determined to propagate humanist scholarship. To assert his scholarly credentials he "chose to inhabit the familiar figure of Saint Jerome," impersonating the Church Father of the fourth and fifth centuries, who by Erasmus' day had become a cultural icon, "with verbal echoes and visual allusions." Holbein's portrait shows Erasmus the soberly but richly dressed scholar in his study, akin to depictions of St. Jerome in his study, an iconographical motif that originated in the fifteenth century. The books on a raised shelf behind a partially drawn curtain and the book on which his hands rest are the guarantors of his scholarly status. Along the exposed edges of the book in the foreground we read ΗΡΑΚΛΕΟΙ ΠΟΝΟΙ and ERASMI ROTERO[DAMI]. These Herculean labours of Erasmus of Rotterdam represent his edition of Jerome. In the dedicatory letter to Warham and elsewhere, Erasmus equated his toil in editing

² For Johann Amerbach's project to edit Jerome, see the commentary and selected translated letters in Barbara C. Halporn, ed., *The Correspondence of Johann Amerbach: Early Printing in Its Social Context* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 338-62.

³ Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 166.



Fig. 2. *Desiderius Erasmus* by Hans Holbein the Younger. Private Collection.
Photograph: Photographic Survey, Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

Jerome with the labours of the famous mythological hero. “The book,” Jardine observes, “bears the title not of its contents, but of the labour it cost its producer/promoter, Erasmus himself.” The portrait offers a “programme for representing Erasmus to his international supporters,” in which “the graphic representation of the author is insistently related to his written production,” and in which the viewer beholds “the scholar as model for emulation.” At work too is a “programme of refashioning saint into scholar.”⁴

The image of Erasmus as *Hieronymus redivivus*, as Jerome reborn, “was designed,” argued Jardine,

to give prominence to the northern humanist movement, to enable it to achieve international prestige and prominence; personal fame was merely a by-product. Jerome stood for the dissemination of true scripture throughout the Western world; Erasmus would stand for the dissemination of humane learning across Europe.

Resuscitating Jerome within himself allowed Erasmus to construct “a multidimensional cultural persona” that was “wholly compatible with that of the *auctor* on the model of the Church Father or the civic hero of Greece and Rome.” What are the effects of this personal and cultural coalescence of saint and scholar? One is “the transition from ‘sacred’ to ‘learned’ as the grounds for personal spiritual salvation,” another the creation of “a spiritual exegesis in which pagan and sacred are fused in the act of textual attention.” This fusion appears to lead to confusion, for “at the heart of the Jerome edition...is the fusion, or perhaps confusion, of secular and sacred attention.”⁵

Mark Vesey retorted: “The historical Erasmus...is neither so confusing nor so easily confused.”⁶ He objected to the conception of the relationship between Jerome and Erasmus exclusively in terms of appropriation and secularization.⁷ Other critics protested in a similar vein. Jacques Chomarat sensed that Jardine had divorced Erasmus “the man of letters” from his patent enterprise of promoting piety, evinced in his many religious publications. From this perspective,

⁴ Ibid., 4, 5, 47, 74.

⁵ Ibid., 4, 5, 59, 63, 74.

⁶ Mark Vesey, “Erasmus’ Jerome: The Publishing of a Christian Author,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 14 (1994): 67.

⁷ Ibid., 66.

Erasmus reduced Jerome from saint to scholar.⁸ Benedetto Clausi preferred Denys Gorce's characterization of the relationship between the humanist and Church Father as a *connaturalité*, a natural congruence in their writing style. The identification of Erasmus with Jerome as construed by Jardine represented an "extreme and trivialized offshoot of the sympathetic relationship" described by Gorce. Jardine upended the usual terms for thinking of the relationship and turned Jerome into "a projection of Erasmus." In addition, she threw cold water on the fire of Erasmus' passion for Jerome.⁹ Locating Erasmus in a religious republic of letters, Constance Furey rejected what she saw as Jardine's transformation of the Renaissance world of scholarship into a secular domain. The way in which Jardine and others conceived of the "merger of the scholarly and the sacred" ended in the ultimate shedding of the sacred by scholars "as they came into their own as paragons of a 'this-worldly' identity."¹⁰

When interpreting Erasmus' Herculean effort to resurrect Jerome, warnings against secular reductionism ought to be heeded. They may very well be the product, however, of imprecision on Jardine's part. Her claims about and for secularity are not strident ones. They compete with claims for spiritual and religious significance. Thus Erasmus' humanist "dissemination of knowledge" in the printed book "made a major contribution to a sixteenth-century spiritual reformation." The intertwining of Jerome and Erasmus points to "a shared project and shared understanding which thicken allusion into felt relationship: a taking on fully by Erasmus of a command of both sacred and secular heritages, whose integration into a specifically Christian classical scholarship is the particular legacy of Jerome."¹¹ Perhaps this corresponds with Gorce's notion of *connaturalité*. Unfortunately, Jardine failed to elaborate on the "spiritual reformation" and the "specifically Christian classical scholarship" with which on both counts she associated Erasmus. If Erasmus represented "the

⁸ Jacques Chomarat, "La *Hieronymi Stridonensis Vita* d'Érasme," *Helmantica* 50 (1999): 109, 124.

⁹ Benedetto Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre: L'edizione erasmiana delle Lettere di Geronimo* (Soveria Manelli: Rubbettino, 2000), 13, 16; Denys Gorce, "La patristique dans la réforme d'Érasme," in *Festgabe Joseph Lortz*, 2 vols., ed. Erwin Iserloh and Peter Manns (Baden-Baden: Bruno Grimm, 1958), 1: 257.

¹⁰ Constance M. Furey, *Erasmus, Contarini, and the Religious Republic of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 13, 148 (quote).

¹¹ Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters*, 60, 148.

construction of charisma in print,” Jardine neglected much of his published work in her detailed bibliographic research. How would a close examination of the publication history of Erasmus’ *Paraphrases on the New Testament* or of the contents of the edition of Jerome have affected her interpretation of the humanist? Bold claims will stimulate discussion, but they may also provoke opposition from those inclined towards a more thorough and careful consideration of evidence.

Let us return to the portrait by Holbein. How influential could it have been as a singular production, not reproduced by the printing press? It certainly allows us to see Erasmus through Holbein’s eyes. Of course, if Erasmus had not agreed with the representation, he would probably have not made a gift of it to Warham. Who knows what Erasmus saw in his likeness? Jardine saw that his “hands rest proprietorially, and with an air of satisfaction, on the closed Jerome, inscribed ‘The Labours of Hercules’.”¹² Leaving aside the puzzling idea of hands possessing an “air of satisfaction,” we can agree that Erasmus’ hands exhibit the touch of possession. But if, according to Jardine, he is “looking the onlooker steadily in the eye,”¹³ might we imagine that, far from grasping the book possessively, Erasmus is giving it to the viewer? Some forty years ago, William Heckscher observed that “the book is placed in such a way that it can only mean that it is being offered to the beholder,” functioning as “a gift within a gift” presented to Warham.¹⁴ Jerome should not remain forever closed—in Erasmus’ hands and not open in the hands of (other) readers. Erasmus did not edit the works of ancient authors so that no one would read them.

In the book that you hold in your hands, I propose to re-envision Erasmus, to revise Holbein’s painted image. This revision consists of two fundamental tasks: opening wide the volumes of Erasmus’ edition of Jerome’s letters and regarding him not as a solitary figure but as one of many editors of Jerome, albeit a pivotal figure in the history of editing Jerome. With a few exceptions, scholars have not

¹² Ibid., 78.

¹³ Ibid., 79.

¹⁴ William S. Heckscher, “Reflections on Seeing Holbein’s Portrait of Erasmus at Longford Castle,” in *Essays in the History of Art Presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, ed. Douglas Fraser, Howard Hibbard, and Milton J. Lewine (London: Phaidon Press, 1967), 132.

delved deeply into the edition. Most have not probed much beyond the prefatory matter of the first volume—the dedicatory letter to Warham and Erasmus’ much discussed biography of Jerome—to analyze the editorial commentary on Jerome’s letters. Erasmus, moreover, did not edit Jerome in utter isolation. Not only did he benefit from the assistance of the Amerbach brothers and other humanist scholars; he also worked within traditions of editing Jerome that originated in the age of the exclusively scribal production of books and that manifested themselves, beginning in the late 1460s, in the early decades of print. By the second half of the sixteenth century, Erasmus’ edition had become an unavoidable point of departure for successive editors, even for those Catholics who shunned him as at best irreverent and at worst heretical. With one small exception, an edition of one of Jerome’s letters published by Martin Luther, editing Jerome remained a Catholic preserve in the religiously divided world of sixteenth-century Europe. In some anthologies, the implicit or explicit use of Erasmus’ edition did not ignite theological controversy. Two Catholic editors, however, Peter Canisius SJ and Mariano Vittori, while serving, respectively, pedagogical and scholarly interests, confessionalized Jerome. They constructed a Catholic Jerome at odds with Erasmus and with Protestantism.

In revising the image of Erasmus, we must not fail to lose sight of the inscription on the edges of his book. Erasmus elaborated on the meaning of ‘Herculean labours’ in an essay on the proverb that first appeared in the 1508 edition of the *Adages*. Herculean labours may be understood in two ways. First, these are exertions that require “massive Herculean strength.” Second, although “they in fact impart supreme benefits to others,” to the labourer they yield practically no profit other than “a little bit of reputation and much contempt.” If any human labours deserve to be called Herculean, they seem to apply especially to those who toil at “restoring the monuments of ancient and genuine literature.” In other words, the editorial work that engaged Erasmus was supremely Herculean, and in both senses with the accent on the second meaning. Those editors who endured “incomparable toil on account of the unbelievable difficulty” of their restorative enterprise brought upon themselves “the height of contempt” from humanity at large. Editorial work was thankless labour, whose recompense amounted to, among other things, the sacrifice of leisure, sleep, and health, the onset of premature old age, and the

hostility and contempt of many. Erasmus thinks it appropriate to say a few words about the hazards of editing not to show off his native talent or hard work but “so that I might make the reader more favourable to me.” What the reader gets is a lengthy exposé of the “immeasurable toil” and the “endless difficulties” inherent in editing the *Adages*. Expanding his essay in 1515, Erasmus adds that he surpassed “all the labours of Hercules.” Whereas the mythic hero was not able to deal with two monsters simultaneously, Erasmus “was obliged to contend with two enormous monsters at the same time.” These were a corrected and enlarged edition of the *Adages* and “all the writings of St. Jerome,” of which the greatest and most difficult part fell to Erasmus, namely the letters.¹⁵

The Herculean labours of Erasmus of Rotterdam, offered to readers, manifest both his accomplished editorial work on Jerome and an advertisement of his consummate editorial prowess. In promoting Jerome, Erasmus was also promoting himself, and Erasmus’ unenviably exhausting work in not only restoring but also elucidating Jerome’s writings added tremendous value to the experience of reading Jerome. Much of his work was innovative, to be borrowed and improved upon by successive editors. Erasmus’ Jerome became “the Jerome of modern patristics.”¹⁶ Yet to a considerable extent, his work was an elaboration on preceding efforts to make Jerome’s letters available to readers, even if Erasmus advertised it as an immense exercise of emendation of textual errors that had corrupted the transmission of the letters.

Jardine was keen to avoid interpreting Erasmus’ self-representation as “a striking, early example of the kind of academic entrepreneurship and self-promotion which has become a recognised feature of the practice of twentieth-century humanism.”¹⁷ The evidence, however, points to a conspicuous dose of an entrepreneurial spirit and self-promotion in Erasmus the author and editor. He aimed to have his books appear in print in time for the prestigious book fair at Frankfurt am Main and did not mind unauthorized reprinting of his works as long as the typographical pirates reproduced his writings

¹⁵ ASD II-5: 23, 24, 27, 28, 40.

¹⁶ Vessey, “Erasmus’ Jerome,” 82.

¹⁷ Jardine, *Erasmus*, 60.

accurately and did not unduly disadvantage the original printer.¹⁸ Presumably, the more editions of his works, the better—and the longer they remained in print. Expounding the adage ‘Herculean labours’ was merely one instance in which he used print to promote his scholarly work and publications. Erasmus admitted only to seeking the favour of his readers. His lengthy discussion of the obstacles he had to overcome in order to produce a collection of proverbs bore witness to his talent and industry, even if he expressly denied wishing to impress his readers with these.

In promoting himself, Erasmus operated within what scholars for the last generation, especially since Elizabeth Eisenstein, have called print culture. Joseph Dane’s recent criticism that this term represents nothing more than an illusory abstraction or a myth will probably not succeed in persuading scholars to abandon the concept.¹⁹ Why cannot the various practices that printers—those who owned printing establishments and those whom they employed—editors, authors, and readers applied to printed materials constitute a broader cultural experience of and context for these materials? For Eisenstein, typographical fixity, the ability to guarantee the preservation and transmission of knowledge, was a key aspect of print culture.²⁰ But for Adrian Johns the world of print was mired in uncertainty: “Far from fixing certainty and truth, print dissolved them.” The typographical transmission of texts was characterized by “ephemerality, transience, and discredit” along with “endemic distrust.”²¹ Printers had to “create credit” to persuade readers and purchasers of books of the reliability of the printed product in a print culture in which piracy was pervasive. Thus “questions of credit took the place of the assumptions of fixity.”²² Even if Dane is correct in stating that Johns’s criticism rests on a misunderstanding of Eisenstein, nevertheless the concept of credit has merit.²³ The assertion and appropriation of

¹⁸ Karine Crousaz, *Érasme et le pouvoir de l'imprimerie* (Lausanne: Antipodes, 2005), 65-68, 113.

¹⁹ Joseph Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality, and Bibliographical Method* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 10-21.

²⁰ Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 1: 113-26.

²¹ Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 172, 246, 263.

²² *Ibid.*, 31.

²³ Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture*, 16.

credit by editors as well as printers is a fundamental feature in the history of the printing of Jerome's letters, starting with the incunabular editions. This has everything to do with the early modern marketing strategy of winning and holding the attention of potential readers and purchasers of editions of Jerome and thus with the culture in which these editions were produced, sold, bought, and read. This was a culture in which printers were well aware that Erasmus' name meant sales.²⁴

That Erasmus took credit for an edition of Jerome advertised as a Herculean scholarly achievement should not surprise us, given the author he was restoring. Jerome was the first to broadcast his own erudition. His "overt self-promotion colours all his work." He "was a singularly important man and he had no intention of allowing his readers to forget it."²⁵ No one, according to Erasmus in the essay on 'Herculean labours,' "puts on display the wealth of his learning more ambitiously in his writings" than Jerome.²⁶ In his biography of Jerome, Erasmus admits that he abundantly blows his proverbial horn.²⁷ Modern scholarship has sustained what Stefan Rebenich has called Jerome's "ambitious plan to succeed in the Latin West as a Christian writer," a plan that was, however, not unique in establishing a Christian literary reputation in antiquity. For this was also the objective, for example, of Rufinus of Aquileia,²⁸ Jerome's old friend and then bitter adversary in a controversy over the theological value of Origen that broke out at the end of the fourth century. Jerome fashioned himself into the conduit to the Latin West of eastern Christian ascetical ideals and of Greek theology in line with the orthodoxy of the Council of Nicaea.²⁹ In absorbing Origen's exegetical method, he sought to surpass him by propounding an innovative and radical approach to Christian biblical interpretation. He insisted that the Old Testament must be understood in terms of the *Hebraica veritas*. Any legitimate interpretation must begin with the Hebrew text, not

²⁴ Crousaz, *Érasme*, 60.

²⁵ Richard J. Goodrich, "Vir Maxime Catholicus: Sulpicius Severus' Use and Abuse of Jerome in the *Dialogi*," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 58 (2007): 190.

²⁶ ASD II-5: 40.

²⁷ *Erasmii Opuscula: A Supplement to the Opera Omnia*, ed. Wallace K. Ferguson (1933; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1978), 136; CWE 61: 23.

²⁸ Stefan Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992), 136 (quote), 138.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 131, 139; Stefan Rebenich, *Jerome* (London: Routledge, 2002), 27-30.

with the Greek Septuagint translation. Jerome in effect portrayed himself as the ultimate authority of the Hebrew truth of the Old Testament.³⁰ His lives of the holy monks Paul, Hilarion, and Malchus are not simply essays in hagiography; they serve to present Jerome as the living embodiment of ascetic virtue.³¹ His letters, in which “he styles himself as the authority in demand,” reach beyond their intended recipients to a wider audience. Assuming a position of superiority, he fulfills “the role of the exegetical teacher, the ethical-moral authority, and the champion of a particular doctrinal position.”³² In his *De viris illustribus*, the earliest ‘who’s who’ of Christian writers, Jerome invented the Christian man of letters. Including himself at the end, he asserted “his unique status among living Christian writers.”³³

Like this ancient, unprecedented, and venerable model of Christian scholarship, Erasmus promoted himself as a new Christian man of letters. In Erasmus, as with Jerome, self-promotion and Christian literary labour were not at cross-purposes. They co-existed peacefully. We should not look for a confusion of the sacred and the secular, or an encroachment of the latter upon the former. Instead, we should view Erasmus’ edition of Jerome as “meant to mark the beginning of a new epoch in Christian literary production.”³⁴

Paratextual analysis unlocks the wealth of evidence for this argument. The French literary critic Gérard Genette coined the term ‘paratext.’ A text, he rightly observes, “is rarely presented in an unadorned state, unreinforced and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal or other productions, such as an author’s name, a title, a preface, illustrations.” Whether or not these “productions” belong to a text, “they surround it and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense of the verb but also in the strongest sense: to *make present*, to ensure the text’s presence in the world, its ‘reception’ and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a

³⁰ Megan Hale Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 57, 66, 71, 74, 109, 123, 131.

³¹ Susan Weingarten, *The Saint’s Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 191.

³² Barbara Conring, *Hieronymus als Briefschreiber: Ein Beitrag zur spätantiken Epistolographie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 226.

³³ Vessey, “Erasmus’ Jerome,” 75.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 94.

book.” Genette calls these surrounding and extending productions paratexts. He holds that “the paratext is what enables a book to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public.” Consider this book. Could its readers navigate it without a table of contents and chapter titles or an index? Could they accept its claim upon scholarship without the verifiable guarantees of evidence contained in its footnotes? Even if Genette’s view of the paratext betrays a modern bias towards the culture of books and reading, it serves our purposes well enough. The *mis en livre* and *mis en page* of printed editions of Jerome are within the modern reader’s realm of recognition. Genette conceives of a paratext as a threshold or a vestibule to a text, allowing “the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back.” It is, as Genette quotes Philippe Lejeune, “a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one’s whole reading of the text,” and thus the paratextual fringe,

always the conveyor of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author, constitutes a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of *transaction*: a privileged place of pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that—whether well or poorly understood and achieved—is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it (more pertinent, of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies).³⁵

Whether or not one agrees with William Slights that Genette reduced one particular type of paratext, the marginal note, to a status subordinate to the text, Slights’s argument is convincing, namely “that the properly managed Renaissance reader was encouraged to view such ‘supplementary’ notes as fully integrated parts of what he or she was reading.”³⁶ The same may be said for other paratexts in Renaissance editions of Jerome in general, and of the Erasmian editions in particular. The accompaniments to Jerome’s texts were vital to asserting editorial proprietary rights to Jerome and fashioning a

³⁵ Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1-2, emphasis in the original. Genette’s book originally appeared in 1987 under the title *Seuils*.

³⁶ William W. E. Slights, *Managing Readers: Printed Marginalia in English Renaissance Books* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 13.

new identity for the Church Father, an Erasmian Jerome or a confessionally constructed Catholic Jerome, for example.

The great variety of paratexts—what Genette would call the “heterogeneous group of practices and discourses of all kinds”³⁷—in Renaissance editions of Jerome show printers and especially editors constantly at work in their strategy of directing the way in which readers should approach these editions as a whole as well as the individual texts of Jerome that they contain. Title pages eventually promoted the textual reliability of the edition and in some instances, as was certainly the case in the four authorized Erasmian editions (1516, 1524-1526, 1533-1534, 1536-1537), the credit due to the editor. Editorial interventions such as prefaces, tables of contents, introductory summaries of texts (*argumenta*), and commentary on particular passages of a text in the form of *scholia* continued to assert an editor’s authority, assuring him the status of “secondary author.”³⁸ At the same time, Erasmus’ paratexts provided not only the scholarly but also the theological and religious ambience for the intended reception of Jerome. The paratexts convey the passion and the ingenuity that he brought to his editorial work. They constitute the most creative element of Erasmus’ edition of Jerome’s letters.

Paratextual analysis has found ready application in the study of French Renaissance studies. François Rigolot maintains that the paratexts in Pierre de Ronsard’s *Franciade* serve “as a pretext for Ronsard to articulate the contradictory aspects of his poetics while, at the same time, staging the fiction of an ‘apprentice reader’ whose credibility is meant to reinforce the imaginary structure of the poetic voice” and, in a separate article on the publication of Louise Labé’s poetry, that “paratextual signs point to considering female authorship as a male invention, which came about because an élite, trained in the classics, needed it for their own gratification.”³⁹ Deborah Losse argued that a chief function of the prologues in sixteenth-century *contes*, one not included by Genette in his catalogue of prefatory functions, was to ease the reader’s transition from the prologue as

³⁷ Genette, *Paratexts*, 2.

³⁸ Slight, *Managing Readers*, 86, 171.

³⁹ François Rigolot, “Ronsard’s Pretext for Paratexts: The Case of the *Franciade*,” *SubStance* no. 56 (1988): 40; “Paratextual Strategy and Sexual Politics: Louise Labé’s *Œuvres lyonnaises*,” in *Book and Text in France, 1400-1600: Poetry on the Page*, ed. Adrian Armstrong and Malcolm Quainton (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), 175.

threshold to the text to the text itself, to “bridge the gap” between the historical circumstances of literary production and the art of the narrative.⁴⁰ Cynthia Brown has demonstrated from paratexts the assertion of authorial presence in the printing of French poetry in the early sixteenth century. Similarly, paratexts have helped Adrian Armstrong to examine the literary self-consciousness of three *grand rhétoriqueur* poets from the late fifteenth to the mid-sixteenth centuries.⁴¹

Surprisingly, Erasmian paratexts have as such attracted little attention beyond Isabelle Diu’s essay on the ways in which the prefaces to Erasmus’ editions of classical and patristic texts both upheld and levelled social hierarchies in the construction of a republic of letters.⁴² This is surprising not only because scholars of early modern European history and literature are increasingly employing paratextual analysis but also because Erasmus was a prolific producer of paratexts. Of these, his prefaces are no doubt the most conspicuous, but one must also include *argumenta*, annotations, and *scholia* as part of the liminal material found in his books. In fact, Erasmus’ first publication was a paratext. In 1495, having recently arrived in Paris, he availed himself of the opportunity of filling in the final folio of the volume containing Robert Gaguin’s *Compendium de origine et gestis Francorum*, entrusted to the Parisian printer, Pierre Le Dru.⁴³ Erasmus produced a letter “in praise of a history of France and its author.”⁴⁴ In two subsequent editions of the *Compendium*—one published in Lyon in 1497, the other in Paris in 1498—the epistolary postface moved to the front of the volume, gaining greater prominence as a

⁴⁰ Deborah N. Losse, *Sampling the Book: Renaissance Prologues and the French Conteurs* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994), 79–89.

⁴¹ Cynthia Brown, *Poets, Patrons, and Printers: Crisis of Authority in Late Medieval France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Adrian Armstrong, *Technique and Technology: Script, Print, and Poetics in France, 1470–1550* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000).

⁴² Isabelle Diu, “Enjeux de pouvoir dans la République des lettres: préfaces et dédicaces d’Érasme pour ses éditions et traductions d’œuvres classiques et patristiques,” in *Le pouvoir des livres à la Renaissance*, ed. Dominique de Courcelles (Paris: École des chartes, 1998), 65–76.

⁴³ P. S. Allen, “Erasmus’ Relations with his Printers,” in Allen, *Erasmus: Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), 114–15.

⁴⁴ Myron P. Gilmore, “*Fides et Eruditio*: Erasmus and the Study of History,” in *Humanists and Jurists: Six Studies in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), 87.

prefatory text. In an edition published in Paris in 1500, the letter reverted to the end of the book.⁴⁵ That Erasmus read paratexts is clear from his *In Elenchum Alberti Pii brevissima scholia* (1532), a response in alphabetical order to a series of index entries to a polemical work, the *Tres & viginti libri in locos lucubrationum variorum D. Erasmi Roterodami* (1531) directed against him by Alberto Pio, a determined Catholic critic of his works.⁴⁶ Pio had read Erasmus' paratexts. His editorial commentary on Jerome figured among Pio's targets for revealing Erasmus' religious errors.⁴⁷

Jerome did not require sixteenth-century editorial commentary to make him a prominent religious authority in Europe. Even before his death in Bethlehem in 419 or 420, his works circulated widely. He succeeded in defining himself as an eminent Christian man of letters, leaving behind a vast correspondence, second only to Augustine's in Christian antiquity.⁴⁸ Jerome often presided over the transcription of his letters and other works, which were transcribed countless times until the dawn of print and slightly afterwards. He bequeathed to Western Christendom the "fruits of rabbinical and Greek exegesis," especially that of the controversial Origen.⁴⁹ His chief contribution to a new Latin version of the Bible was his translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew, not from the Greek Septuagint. Posterity, however, preferred his translation of the Psalms according to a Greek text. He revised the translation of the four Gospels instead of producing a fresh translation and did not translate

⁴⁵ For the publication history of the *Compendium*, see Franck Collard, *Un historien au travail à la fin du XVe siècle: Robert Gaguin* (Geneva: Droz, 1996), 279-91. Of the two printings that immediately followed the *editio princeps* of 1495, the edition published in Lyon preceded the one that was published in Paris, which Collard has redated to 1498 from 1497. In addition, Collard has convincingly argued that the next Parisian edition definitely appeared in 1500. Previously, scholars had entertained the possibility that it might have been printed in 1501. See *ibid.*, 285-88. For the text of Erasmus' letter in the 1497, 1498, and 1500 editions, see Robert Gaguin, *Compendium de origine et gestis Francorum* (Lyon: Johannes Trechsel, 1497), a3v-a4r; (Paris: André Bocard, 1498), a3v-a4r; (Paris: Thielman Kerver, 1500), F2r-F3r. The modern critical edition appears in Allen 1: 148-52, ep. 45.

⁴⁶ For Erasmus' text (in English translation), see CWE 84: 363-85.

⁴⁷ Hilmar M. Pabel, "Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism of Erasmus' Edition of St. Jerome," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 6 (2004): 239-45.

⁴⁸ Paul Antin, *Essai sur Saint Jérôme* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1951), 183.

⁴⁹ Alfons Fürst, *Hieronymus: Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2003), 138.

the remaining twenty-three books of the New Testament.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, in the Middle Ages he was revered as the one who was solely responsible for the Latin Vulgate Bible. In 1295, Pope Boniface VIII officially confirmed what the medieval West had acknowledged since the late eighth century: Jerome was one of the four great doctors of the Church along with Augustine, Ambrose, and Gregory the Great.⁵¹ His cult blossomed in the fourteenth and remained vigorous into the sixteenth century. Images of Jerome abounded in private and public spaces. His name was a popular choice for parents when they brought their sons to baptism. Several monastic congregations founded in the second half of the fourteenth century took inspiration from Jerome. Among these, the Spanish Hieronymites became tremendously successful.⁵² Jerome stood for a late-medieval piety that valued asceticism, penance, devotion to the suffering and crucified Christ, the performance of good works to achieve salvation at Judgment Day, and the reform of a Church that had grown too wealthy and worldly.⁵³ Despite his vow not to read secular books in the famous dream in which he received a heavenly drubbing for being a Ciceronian and not a Christian, his “distinction as a theologian” rests on his making the culture of classical antiquity the basis of Christian scholarship and his combination of “Christian literary culture” with monastic asceticism.⁵⁴ Accordingly, Renaissance humanists both south and north of the Alps hailed the trilingual and eloquent Jerome as the patron of the *studia humanitatis* and of a rhetorical theology, grounded in a learned piety, that was at odds with the dialectic orientation of medieval scholastic theology. He was, as Eugene Rice impressively demonstrated, a cultural hero and a cultural icon of the Renaissance.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975), 87-89, 283-84; Williams, *The Monk and the Book*, 66.

⁵¹ Eugene F. Rice, Jr., *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 32-33.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 68, 70.

⁵³ Berndt Hamm, “Hieronymus-Begeisterung und Augustinismus vor der Reformation: Beobachtungen zur Beziehung zwischen Humanismus und Frömmigkeitstheologie (am Beispiel Nürnbergs),” in *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology (1300-1650): Essays Dedicated to Heiko Augustinus Oberman in Honor of his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Kenneth Hagen, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990), 152-57.

⁵⁴ Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 139.

⁵⁵ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 199, calls Jerome a “culture hero.”

Rice's admirable book, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (1985), appeared a few years before a tide of studies of the reception of the Church Fathers in early modern Europe gained momentum in the 1990s. A host of essays gathered together in several collections have explored a rich diversity of subjects on the topic of this reception. The best chronologically oriented guide is a two-volume book edited by Irena Backus. Some collections have dealt with large themes, such as biblical interpretation and editing.⁵⁶ Among the giants in this growing field of study one must include Backus, Pierre Petitmengin, and Jean-Louis Quantin.

A little more than thirty years ago, Rice, thinking of Erasmus, complained: "It is astonishing how little attention has been given to the patristic scholarship that was the core of his intellectual life."⁵⁷ Prior to this pronouncement, in 1969, Charles Béné had produced the only monographic study relevant to Erasmus' reception of the Fathers with a book on Erasmus' debt to Augustine, mostly to the *De doctrina christiana*, for his espousal of key elements of humanism, such as the compatibility of secular and sacred studies, the prudential use of pagan classical literature, a learned piety, and the place of eloquence in Christian preaching.⁵⁸ André Godin, writing more than a decade after Béné, announced, however: "Erasmus' Augustinianism has been overestimated." He took seriously Erasmus' assertion that "a single page of Origen teaches me more of Christian philosophy than ten pages of Augustine." Not surprisingly, "in literary terms, spiritually, existentially, Erasmus was in Origen's grip." A principal thesis of Godin's monumental *Érasme, lecteur d'Origène* (1982) is that the humanist, avoiding the question of the Church Father's

⁵⁶ Irena Backus, ed., *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997); David C. Steinmetz, ed., *Die Patristik in der Bibelexegese des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999); Mariarosa Cortesi, ed., *I Padri sotto il torchio: le edizioni dell'antichità cristiana nei secoli XV-XVI, Atti del Convegno di studi Certosa del Galluzzo, Firenze, 25-26 giugno 1999* (Florence: SIS-MEL—Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2002).

⁵⁷ Eugene F. Rice, Jr., "The Humanist Idea of Christian Antiquity and the Impact of Greek Patristic Work on Sixteenth-Century Thought," in *Classical Influences on European Culture, A.D. 1500-1700: Proceedings of An International Conference held at King's College, Cambridge April 1974*, ed. R. R. Bolgar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 200.

⁵⁸ Charles Béné, *Érasme et Saint Augustin ou influence de Saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Érasme* (Geneva: Droz, 1969).

orthodoxy, valued him above all as an exegete. Erasmus' selective reading of Origen served as the Trojan horse that gave humanist exegesis entry into the citadel of theology. Godin believed that it was highly probable that Erasmus' appropriation of Origen signalled the emancipation of exegesis from theology. Yet, thanks to Origen, for Erasmus spirituality and exegesis were necessarily linked.⁵⁹ And one should say the same for exegesis and theology, for Erasmus' humanist exegesis was not a force separated or liberated from theology, unless by theology we mean only scholastic theology, but the heart and soul of a rhetorical theology aimed at the spiritual transformation of Christians through the ministry of preaching.

A comprehensive and detailed synthesis of Erasmus' reception of the Fathers remains to be written. It will no doubt engage with a consensus that has emerged in various shorter studies.⁶⁰ Erasmus read and edited the Fathers to restore or renew theology. The Fathers were the earliest Christian expositors of the Bible. Their chronological proximity to the sacred texts made them their most authoritative interpreters, the purest conduits of the purity of God's Word. Patristic exegesis provided an alternative approach to theology as it had been practised in accordance with the medieval scholastic method, which privileged logical analysis and was indebted to Aristotelian philosophy. Although fallible, the Fathers represented a theology that was far superior to what in Erasmus' jaundiced opinion was the insipid and confusing sophistry of the schoolmen. Recourse to the Fathers had important practical benefits, such as the revitalization of preaching and the return to a more authentic piety rooted in a reverent attentiveness to the teachings of Christ and the apostles in the New Testament so as to breathe new life into the Church. For Backus, moreover, Erasmus published patristic texts primarily "to show the relative and fluid nature of the teaching they contained."⁶¹

⁵⁹ André Godin, *Érasme, lecteur d'Origène* (Geneva: Droz, 1982), 3, 76, 242, 244-45, 685; Erasmus: Allen 3: 337, ep. 844, cited in Godin, *Érasme, lecteur d'Origène*, 3, n. 9.

⁶⁰ See especially Gorce, "La patristique dans la réforme d'Érasme," 238-54; Robert Peters, "Erasmus and the Fathers: Their Practical Value," *Church History* 36 (1967): 254-61; Olin, "Erasmus and the Church Fathers," 33-47; Jan den Boeft, "*Illic aureum quoddam ire flumen*: Erasmus' Enthusiasm for the Patres," in *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar*, ed. J. Sperna Weiland and W. Th. M. Frijhoff (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988), 172-81; Jan den Boeft, "Erasmus and the Church Fathers," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 2: 537-72.

⁶¹ Backus, "Erasmus and the Spirituality of the Early Church," 114.

Doctrine was not fixed for all time from the birth of Christianity. It developed over time. This historical sensitivity and approach is, according to Christine Christ-von Wedel, the feature of Erasmus' theology that makes him an "advocate of a modern Christianity."⁶²

Erasmus' predilection for the Fathers was typically humanist. Fifteenth-century Italian humanists, who began the work of editing the Fathers and of translating Greek patristic texts into Latin, and his Italian humanist contemporaries valued the Fathers for the same reasons that he did. They hailed them as paragons of Christian eloquence, agents of the reconciliation of classical and Christian culture and of learning and piety, the most respectable interpreters of the Bible, harbingers of a rhetorical theology that ought to replace a repulsively impractical scholastic theology, and guides for a healthy moral and spiritual Christian life.⁶³

Godin rightly pointed out that the "immense" labour that Erasmus invested in editing the Fathers has attracted little attention.⁶⁴ The publication record is staggering with editions of Jerome, Cyprian, Arnobius, Hilary of Poitiers, John Chrysostom, Irenaeus of Lyon, Athanasius, Ambrose, Lactantius, Augustine, Basil of Caesarea, and Origen. The Greek Fathers appeared in Latin translation. This ensemble deserves to be called the first printed patrology, even if it lacks a uniform format and presentation and provides only a few Greek Fathers, accessible only in Latin.⁶⁵ If any edition of an author, Christian or not, published by Erasmus deserves close inspection, his Jerome will repay rich dividends on the investment of rigorous research, for, judging by the abundant paratextual material, he lavished more attention on Jerome than any other author. Only in 2000 did the first book on the edition of Jerome appear: Clausi's instructive *Ridar vode all'antico Padre: L'edizione erasmiana delle Lettere di Gerolamo*.⁶⁶

⁶² Christine Christ-von Wedel, *Erasmus von Rotterdam: Anwalt eines neuzeitlichen Christentums* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2003).

⁶³ Charles Stinger, "Italian Renaissance Learning and the Church Fathers," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 2: 473-510.

⁶⁴ Godin, *Érasme, lecteur d'Origène*, 560.

⁶⁵ Pierre Petitmengin, "Les patrologies avant Migne," in *Migne et le renouveau des études patristiques: Actes du Colloque de Saint-Flour*, ed. A. Mandouze and J. Foulheron (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985), 19-20.

⁶⁶ For a distillation of Clausi's analysis, see Benedetto Clausi and Vincenza Milazzo, "Il commento, gli scolii, il testo: spinte ideali e percorsi reali dell'*Opus Hieronymianum* di Erasmo," in *I Padri sotto il torchio*, 67-114.

Apart from a few disagreements on some specific points, my book differs from Clausi's in three ways. First, our categories of analysis do not completely coincide. Clausi studies the edition in light of Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi*, of his establishment of Jerome's texts, and his editorial commentary. Although establishing a text is an essential editorial task, I decided not to pursue this aspect of Erasmus' labours. He does not tell us which manuscripts he used. Furthermore, Fritz Husner persuasively argued that Erasmus' recension of Jerome's texts is principally based on previously printed editions. The editor consulted manuscripts only to establish particular passages.⁶⁷ To attempt a comprehensive comparison between the texts in the four authorized Erasmian editions and their printed predecessors in order to determine which of these he used for which text and which of these he used the most would demand a more than Herculean effort bordering on insanity. It would be much easier and more worthwhile to attend to Erasmus' voice in his explicit editorial interventions than to confront his silence in Jerome's texts. Instead of exploring the foundations of these texts, I turn to their more obvious classification. Second, whereas Clausi for the most part confines his examination of the editorial commentary to the abundant *scholia*, I also take into account the other paratextual genres that Erasmus employs to coach the reader's reception of Jerome. Third, I cast a much larger contextual net than Clausi. To understand Erasmus' achievement in its historical framework I consider his editorial predecessors and successors in greater detail than Clausi. This will show the traditional and innovative aspects of Erasmus' work as well as its influence.

Regrettably, I have done no more than mention one scholar who commented on Jerome after Erasmus. The annotations of Henricus Gravius (d. 1552) first appeared in their entirety in the seventeenth century as a sort of appendix to Vittori's edition. Despite Gravius' undeniable erudition, Vittori was the main editorial rival of Erasmus. Gravius' *scholia* merit a separate study.

A generation ago, Jan den Boeft held that scholars could not attempt "an adequate summary" of Erasmus' treatment of the Church Fathers without first studying his reception of Jerome.⁶⁸ This

⁶⁷ Fritz Husner, "Die Handschrift der Scholien des Erasmus von Rotterdam zu den Hieronymusbriefen," in *Festschrift Gustav Binz* (Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co., 1935), 143.

⁶⁸ Jan den Boeft, "*Illic aureum quoddam ire flumen*," 174.

study does not clear the way for an exhaustive synthesis of his reception of the Fathers, at least not completely. My focus on the surfeit of paratexts in Erasmus' edition of Jerome does not and cannot produce the complete *Érasme, lecteur de Jérôme*. To do this one must scour the works of Erasmus in search of imitations of Hieronymian Latin style as well as the many explicit and surely also implicit references to Jerome. He cites Jerome far more than any other Christian author in the *Adages*.⁶⁹ Nearly half of the patristic references in the first edition of the *Annotations on the New Testament* are to Jerome.⁷⁰ In a letter ghost-written by Jerome (ep. 46), his friends Paula and Eustochium urge Marcella, a third friend, to leave Rome and join them in Bethlehem. Her migration will reap spiritual benefits. Apart from the recitation of the Psalms, silence reigns in the rusticity of "Christ's little country place." The audible delights are aplenty: "Wherever you turn, the ploughman, holding his plough-handle, repeatedly sings 'alleluia' (*arator stiuam tenens alleluia decantat*), the sweating reaper entertains himself with Psalms, the vinedresser sings something from David while trimming the vine with his curved pruning hook."⁷¹ Did Erasmus recall this lyrical description when in the *Paraclesis*, a preface to the *Novum instrumentum*, he longs for the farmer at his plough-handle constantly to sing something from the New Testament (*ad stivam aliquid decantet agricola*), the weaver to do the same at his shuttle, and the traveller to lighten his journey with stories from the Scriptures?⁷² The study of the reception of Jerome within Erasmus' works will be just as challenging and necessary as the enterprise of assessing it within the Herculean edition that Erasmus offered to readers.

My *Herculean Labours* is certainly not the first word on Erasmus' reception of Jerome, within the edition or without. Nor should it be the last. If this book stimulates further research on the edition and on Erasmus' reception of Jerome in particular and the Church Fathers in general, it will achieve its reward.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 175.

⁷⁰ Erika Rummel, *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: From Philologist to Theologian* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 54.

⁷¹ CSEL 54: 342-43.

⁷² *Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus: Ausgewählte Werke*, ed. Hajo and Annemarie Holborn (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1933), 142.

CHAPTER ONE

JEROME IN PRINT

Prelude: Manuscript Collections of Jerome's Letters

For almost twelve hundred years, from the time he wrote them until the dawn of print, someone had to copy out Jerome's letters, treatises, biblical commentaries, and translations by hand for others to read them. The process of transcription began with Jerome himself, who had to copy out his own writings when scribes were not available. Stenographers to whom he dictated many of his letters and the scribes who reproduced them under his supervision or from copies in the possession of his aristocratic and ecclesiastical friends and patrons ensured the diffusion and publication of the letters. Jerome relied on aristocratic patronage to fund publication, but he was well aware of the unauthorized transcription of his works.¹

In manuscript form, Jerome's letters survive (although not from the fourth and fifth centuries) in hundreds of codices scattered throughout the libraries of the world. We encounter them in smaller or larger collections and as discrete entities, such as the letter to Paulinus of Nola (ep. 53) which, as of the ninth century, often served as the preface to the Bible because in it Jerome identifies and describes the books belonging to the scriptural canon.² On 29 March 1431, Laurentius Erasmii in the Silesian diocese of Breslau completed

¹ Georg Grützmacher, *Hieronymus: eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte*, 3 vols. (1901-1908; repr., Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1986), 1: 21-28; Evaristo Arns, *La technique du livre d'après saint Jérôme* (Paris: Boccard, 1953), 37-79, 141-49; Stefan Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992), 132-33, 148, 152, 166, 168, 197; Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 137, 139; Rebenich, *Jerome* (London: Routledge, 2002), 41.

² Samuel Berger, *Histoire de la Vulgate pendant les premiers siècles du moyen âge* (Paris: Hachette, 1893), 305; Berger, "Les préfaces jointes aux livres de la Bible dans les manuscrits de la Vulgate," *Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres de l'Institut de France*, 1st ser., 11/2 (1904): 21, 33; Maurice E. Schild, *Abendländische Bibelvorreden bis zur Lutherbibel* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1970), 42.

the transcription of a “book of the letters of St. Jerome, priest,” that enumerates 126 texts in its table of contents, while 159 texts are listed in the table of contents in the “distinguished book of the letters of Blessed Jerome, priest,” bearing the coat of arms of Federigo of Montefeltre, Duke of Urbino (1422-1482).³ Another large fifteenth-century codex of Jerome’s correspondence, which the scribe separated into 147 texts, ends with an *ex libris*: “LIBER PETRI DE MEDICIS COS FIL”—a book from the library of Piero de’ Medici (1416-1469), son of his more famous father, Cosimo, and father of the illustrious Lorenzo. Piero commonly used this *ex libris* in the second half of the 1450s. The Jerome manuscript is consistent “in quality and style” with other manuscripts that Piero commissioned in the middle of this decade.⁴

In the Renaissance, Jerome’s letters formed part of ecclesiastical and private libraries. Many *epistolaria* began life in monastic *scriptoria*. One ninth-century book of Jerome’s letters that belonged to the monastery of St. Maximinus in Micy near Orléans was copied out by order of Abbot Peter.⁵ The Augustinian collegiate church of St. George in Goslar in northern Germany owned a book of letters copied out in 1144, a year before the church was destroyed by fire.⁶ A threat to potential thieves accompanied the note of ownership: “May whoever takes [this book] away be accursed all the days of his life.”⁷ Some books were available for purchase. In an inscription above the table of contents of “the golden letters of Blessed Jerome, priest and doctor of the Church,” Heinrich Neithart (or Nithart, as he spells his name in the inscription), canon lawyer, Augustinian canon, and parish priest in Straubing in the diocese of Regensburg, notes: “I bought this book of the letters of blessed Jerome...at the time of the general council of Siena in the same city of Siena on the

³ BAV, Vat. lat. 350, Ir-Iv (table of contents), 211v (dated colophon); BAV, Urb. lat. 51, 1r-4v (table of contents), 7r (coat of arms).

⁴ BML, Plut. XIX, Cod. 12, 428v (reference to Piero); Francis Ames-Lewis, *The Library and Manuscripts of Piero di Cosimo de’ Medici* (New York: Garland, 1984), 45-46, 104.

⁵ BNF, Lat. 1862, 82v.

⁶ E. Schiller, *Bürgerschaft und Geistlichkeit in Goslar (1290-1365): Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Verhältnisses von Stadt und Kirche im späten Mittelalter* (1912; repr., Amsterdam: P. Schippers N. V., 1965), 23-26; Werner Gottschalk, *Chronik der Stadt Goslar, 919-1919 unter Einbeziehung des Reichs- bzw. Landesgeschehens und des Umlandes der Stadt*, vol. 1: 919-1802 (Goslar: Julius Brumby, 1999), 237.

⁷ HAB, 195 Helmst., 1r.

twenty-fourth day of the month of October in the year of our Lord 1423, and I gave seven ducats for it.”⁸

Large collections of letters supplied their owners and readers with a more comprehensive grasp of Jerome’s literary activity. His burgeoning cult in western Christian culture might have not only enhanced the authority of his works but also added impetus to their transcription. Giovanni d’Andrea (d. 1348), professor of canon law at the University of Bologna and probably the most energetic promoter of Jerome’s cult in the first half of the fourteenth century, would have been very pleased if his efforts had stimulated book production. His own book, the *Hieronymianus*, completed one or two years before his death, not only related the saint’s miracles but also provided “a list of his writings and a selection of excerpts from them.” The book appeared in print in Cologne (1482), Paris (1511), and Basel (1514).⁹ One can imagine that by the fifteenth century Jerome’s letters as well as his other works would have constituted a *sine qua non* for many a library.

Jerome’s prestige as a doctor of the Church would have prominently placed him in what we might call the public domain of religious culture, but his letters had private uses too. Revered by humanists as the consummate scholar and depicted as early as the second half of the fourteenth century at work or in contemplation alone in his study,¹⁰ he served as a model of private reading. Angelo Decembrio in his *De politia litteraria* (1462) has Leonello d’Este, Duke of Ferrara, speak in favour of adorning a humanist library with an image of Jerome in the act of writing.¹¹

Jerome too was a source of private devotion and inspiration in fifteenth-century monasteries, whose *scriptoria* competed with the

⁸ BSB, Clm. 21214, IIIIr. For a biographical sketch, see Hermann Tüchle, “Heinrich Neithart der Ältere,” in *Kirchen und Klöster in Ulm: ein Beitrag zum katholischen Leben in Ulm und Neu-Ulm von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Hans Eugen Specker and Hermann Tüchle (Ulm: Süddeutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1979), 212-15. I am grateful to Martin Cable for drawing my attention to this reference.

⁹ Eugene F. Rice, Jr., *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 64, 224 n. 34.

¹⁰ On depictions of Jerome in his study, see Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 104-13; Daniel Russo, *Saint Jérôme en Italie: étude d’iconographie et de spiritualité (XIIIe-XVIIe siècles)* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte; Rome: École française de Rome, 1987), 253-73.

¹¹ Anthony Grafton, *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 30-31.

printing press in book production.¹² In 1465, Cristannus Eysenmann, a Benedictine monk and priest at the monastery of St. Sebastian in Ebersberg in the Bavarian diocese of Freising, produced by hand a small but stout book. This transcription of an eclectic selection of texts began with the passion narratives taken from the four Gospels. The longest and third section of the book, following the prologue to the Rule of Benedict, was devoted to a selection of Jerome's letters.¹³

Father Cristannus produced the book, most likely intended for private devotion, while Abbot Eckhard presided over the monastery (1446-1472).¹⁴ Eckhard implemented at Ebersberg the monastic reforms of the Abbey of Melk, which spread throughout Benedictine houses in Austria and southern Bavaria. Melk participated in the transalpine transmission of early, or monastic, humanism in the region under its influence. Its reforms encompassed private reading and study, writing and copying, primarily for spiritual edification. Reformers recommended the Bible, the Church Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, Benedictine writers, including reformers such as Bernard of Clairvaux, *artes moriendi*, works of the *Devotio moderna*, and Carthusian devotional literature.¹⁵ On Pentecost 1454, another monk at Ebersberg, by the name of Erasmus, began copying out Bernard's treatise to Eugenius III on the power of prelates, the *De consideratione*, as the scribe noted on the first folio of a large codex. Did the same

¹² Curt F. Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book: The Scribes, The Printers, The Decorators* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960), 27-28.

¹³ BSB, Clm. 6043, 1r-36v (passion narratives), 38v-39r (prologue), 39r-136r (letters of Jerome). Eysenmann identifies himself on 264r.

¹⁴ For the history of St. Sebastian's monastery at Ebersberg, see Josef Hemmerle, *Die Benediktinerklöster in Bayern* (Augsburg: Kommissionsverlag Winfried-Werk, 1970), 79-82; Hermann and Anna Bauer, *Klöster in Bayern: Eine Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der Klöster in Oberbayern, Niederbayern und der Oberpfalz*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1993), 138-40; Gottfried Mayr, "Die Geschichte des Klosters Ebersberg: eine Darstellung seiner historischen Entwicklung im Überblick," in *Kloster Ebersberg: Prägestkraft christlich-abendländischer Kultur im Herzen Altbayerns*, ed. Landkreis und Kreis-sparkasse Ebersberg (Munich: Verlag Lutz Garnies, 2002), 13-50, esp. 32-34. See also the notes on Ebersberg in Meta Niederkorn-Bruck, *Die Melker Reform im Spiegel der Visitationen* (Vienna and Munich: R. Oldenburg Verlag, 1994), 184-85.

¹⁵ Albert Groiss, *Spätmittelalterliche Lebensformen der Benediktiner von der Melker Observanz vor dem Hintergrund ihrer Bräuche: ein darstellender Kommentar zum Caeremoniale Melli-cense des Jahres 1460* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1999), 58-61, 140-63; Niederkorn-Bruck, *Die Melker Reform*, 164, 166, 170. On monastic humanism, see also Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Contribution of Religious Orders to Renaissance Thought and Learning," *American Benedictine Review* 21 (1970): 1-55.

monk copy out the considerable selection of Jerome's letters—they take up almost fifty folios—in the second half of the codex?¹⁶

Perhaps in 1489, some twenty years after Father Cristannus transcribed some of Jerome's letters, another monk reported that “long ago” (*iam olim*) he had not only read the Church Father's letters but had copied them out with his own hands.¹⁷ This monk was another Erasmus—Erasmus of Rotterdam, not a Benedictine, but a member of the community of Augustinian canons at Steyn in the Low Countries. He made the comment to a fellow Augustinian canon, Cornelis Gerard, in a letter written in a humanist context. In Jerome's letters, “we can find the greatest possible number of darts to repel the barbarians' assaults more easily than mentioning them.”¹⁸ Around the same time, Erasmus wrote the first version of a treatise defending humanist scholarship against the “barbarians,” the scholastic opponents of humanism, which, expanded, he published in 1520 as the *Antibarbarorum liber*.¹⁹ In both the letter to Gerard and in the *Antibarbari*, Erasmus refers to the image of the “captive woman,” Jerome's metaphor for ancient pagan culture, shorn of anything objectionable to Christians.²⁰ We can thus surmise that in his early reading Erasmus drew inspiration from Jerome for the humanist project of promoting the study of antiquity and of reconciling it with Christianity. In the *De contemptu mundi*, published in 1521 but first written around the time of the original draft of the *Antibarbari*, Jerome heads the list of Christian writers appropriate for monastic reading.²¹

In 1489, Erasmus was in his early 20s, 23 if one accepts Harry Vredevelt's argument that he was born in 1466.²² What could he have meant in his letter by “long ago”? Did he transcribe Jerome's letters before he entered Steyn no later than 1487, perhaps during

¹⁶ BSB, Clm. 5803, 1r, 133r-183r.

¹⁷ CWE 1: 35, ep. 22; Allen 1: 103, ep. 22.

¹⁸ CWE 1: 35, ep. 22.

¹⁹ Albert Hyma, *The Youth of Erasmus*, 2nd ed., enlarged (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968), 183, 197, 199, 201, 203; István Bejczy, “Overcoming the Middle Ages: Historical Reasoning in Erasmus' Antibarbarian Writings,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 16 (1996): 36-39.

²⁰ CWE 1: 35, ep. 22; CWE 23: 91.

²¹ CWE 66: 170.

²² Harry Vredevelt, “The Ages of Erasmus and the Year of His Birth,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 46 (1993): 754-809.

his days as a student in Deventer or 's-Hertogenbosch?²³ Or, if his comment was an exaggeration, did he copy out the letters soon after he arrived in Steyn? What source or sources did he use? Did he use one or more manuscript codices, or did a printed edition serve as his copy text? Several incunabular editions had already appeared by 1480. Copying from printed books was very common in the second half of the fifteenth century. Curt Bühler went so far as to claim that “every manuscript ascribed to the second half of the fifteenth century is potentially (and often without question) a copy of some incunable.”²⁴ Incunabular editions of Jerome’s letters were copied out at least three times.²⁵ Whatever the case may be, Erasmus supports Bühler’s view that potentially every reader was his or her own scribe. Some scribes were among the first printers, including Peter Schoeffer, who established himself in Mainz as successor to Johann Gutenberg, where in 1470 he printed one of the earliest editions of Jerome’s letters.²⁶

The Incunabular Jerome and Beyond

Who printed the first edition of Jerome’s letters? In the nineteenth century, Ludwig Hain, arguably the most eminent bibliographer of *incunabula*, first listed among the edition of Jerome’s letters the volume produced by Johannes Mentelin in Strassburg (Hain *8549; GW 12422). It is undated, but it is now assumed to have been printed no later than 1469. A catalogue of incunables in Italian libraries gave the nod to two German clerics, Conrad Sweynheym from the Arch-

²³ Richard DeMolen, *The Spirituality of Erasmus of Rotterdam* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1987), xiii, asserts that Erasmus entered Steyn in 1485/1486. Vredeveld, “The Ages of Erasmus,” 794, argues for 1487.

²⁴ Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book*, 16. For a more recent corroboration, see Albert Derolez, “The Copying of Printed Books for Humanistic Bibliophiles in the Fifteenth Century,” in *From Script to Book: A Symposium*, ed. Hans Bekker-Nielson, Marianne Børch, Bengt Algot Sørensen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1986), 140-60.

²⁵ BAV, Vat. lat. 343-344; BNF, Lat. 1890-1891. Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book*, 39, mentions a transcription from 1477 of Giovanni Andrea Bussi’s edition of Jerome’s *Epistolae* (1468) belonging to Trinity College, Cambridge (MS. R.17.4).

²⁶ Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book*, 22-23, 48; Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *Peter Schoeffer of Gernsheim and Mainz with a List of his Surviving Books and Broad-sides* (Rochester: Leo Hart, 1950), 9-25; Sheila Edmunds, “From Schoeffer to Vêrard: Concerning the Scribes who became Printers,” in *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, circa 1450-1520*, ed. Sandra Hindman (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 27-29.

diocese of Mainz and Arnold Pannartz from the Archdiocese of Cologne.²⁷ They set up shop in Subiaco, where at the end of October 1465 they printed the works of the Church Father Lactantius, the first printed book in Italy. The duo moved to Rome in 1467, where and when they turned out an edition of Cicero's *Epistolae ad familiares*.²⁸ At the end of 1468, on 13 December, as the colophon says, they completed the second of a two-volume edition (Hain *8550, 8551; GW 12421) of "the letters of the distinguished Doctor, Eusebius Hieronymus...in the home of the renowned man Pietro de' Massimi." They specified the location as the home of the brothers Pietro and Francesco de' Massimi near the Campo dei Fiori in the colophons of another two-volume set of letters that they printed in 1470 (Hain *8552; GW 12423). Sweynheym and Pannartz dissolved their partnership sometime in 1473, but both remained in Rome. Pannartz took over the presses in the de' Massimi home. In 1476, either the year of or before his death, he printed his last book: the first volume of Jerome's letters (Hain 8555; GW 12427). Another German printer, Georg Lauer, who may have worked for Sweynheym and Pannartz as a typesetter, completed the edition with the second volume in April 1479 (Hain 8555; GW 12428).²⁹ In the 1960s, Frederick Goff, the leading American bibliographer of *incunabula*, also agreed that Sweynheym and Pannartz printed the *editio princeps* of Jerome's letters.³⁰

By the 1980s, the scholarly consensus crystallized around another German printer, Sextus Riessinger. John Sharpe argued that Riessinger, another priest, printed the (undated) *editio princeps* in Rome not after 1467 and suggested that this was the first book

²⁷ *Indice generale degli incunaboli delle biblioteche d'Italia*, vol. 3, ed. T. M. Guarnaschelli and E. Valenziani with E. Cerulli (Rome: La Libreria dello Stato, 1954), 89, no. 4733. The editions printed by Sextus Riessinger and by Mentelin follow, respectively, as nos. 4734 and 4735. Lehmann-Haupt, *Peter Schoeffer*, 92, also held that the 1468 printing by Sweynheym and Pannartz was the *editio princeps*.

²⁸ Ferdinand Geldner, *Die deutschen Inkunabeldrucker: ein Handbuch der deutschen Buchdrucker des XV. Jahrhunderts nach Druckorten*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1968-1970), 2: 25, 29, 39.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 2: 43-44, 47.

³⁰ Frederick R. Goff, *Incunabula in American Libraries: A Third Census of Fifteenth-Century Books Recorded in North American Collections* (New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1964), H-161.

printed in that city.³¹ Riessinger learned the printer's craft in Strassburg, probably under Mentelin, before coming to Italy. After a brief period in Rome, he moved to Naples to ply his trade there but returned to Rome in 1478 or 1479. He left for Strassburg in 1483 and died after 1502 as a parish priest near the Alsatian city.³² Sharpe's view was not without precedent. At the end of the eighteenth century, Karl Traugott Gottlob Schoenemann identified the same edition as the *editio princeps*, listing 1467 as the year of publication but attributing it to the German printer Ulrich Han.³³ Alfred Feder, whose book on Jerome's *De viris illustribus* appeared in 1927, concluded that the edition appeared in print at the end of 1467, most likely the product of the combined efforts of Han and Riessinger.³⁴ In an article published in 1978, A. C. de la Mare and Lotte Hellinga, two leading modern incunabulists, dated the edition ca. 1468 and identified the printer as Riessinger, leaving open the possibility that he collaborated with Han. They listed this edition ahead of the 1468 printing by Sweynheym and Pannartz.³⁵ Most recently, in 2003, the monumental *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* put the edition printed by Riessinger at the top of its list of fifteenth-century printings of Jerome's letters (GW 12420; Hain *8550). The clinching proof, as Feder and Sharpe observed, that the edition printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz represented the second, not the first, printing of Jerome's letters is that its editor, Giovanni Andrea Bussi, the Bishop

³¹ John Lawrence Sharpe III, "Impressum apud Ruessinger," in *A Leaf from the Letters of St. Jerome, first printed by Sixtus Reissinger [sic], Rome, c. 1466-1467*, ed. Bennett Gilbert (Los Angeles: Zeitlin & Ver Brugge; London: H.M. Fletcher, 1981), 9-30. I am grateful to Professor Sharpe for supplying me with a copy of his essay. Reinhold van Lennep, "L'édition princeps des *Epistolae (et tractatus) S. Hieronymi*," *Livre et l'estampe* no. 126 (1986): 197-235, came to the same conclusion as Sharpe.

³² Sharpe, "Impressum apud Ruessinger," 22-23; Ferdinand Geldner, *Die deutschen Inkunabeldrucker*, 2: 35-37.

³³ Karl Traugott Gottlob Schoenemann, *Bibliotheca historico-literaria patrum latinorum a Tertulliano principe usque ad Gregorium M. et Isidorum Hispalensem*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1792-1794), 1: 462, 483-87.

³⁴ Alfred Feder, *Studien zum Schriftstellerkatalog des Heiligen Hieronymus* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1927), 197.

³⁵ A. C. de la Mare and Lotte Hellinga, "The First Book Printed in Oxford: The *Expositio Symboli* of Rufinus," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 7/2 (1978): 231-32.

of Aleria and by 1472 head of the Vatican Library, referred in his preface to the editor of a previously printed edition.³⁶

That editor was Teodoro de' Lelli. We know little about him and nothing about his role as editor beyond what he tells us in his preface. He was born in 1428, obtained a doctorate in civil and canon law, and, as a rising star at the Roman curia, progressed quickly in an ecclesiastical career. Under Pope Pius II (1458-1464) he became an auditor at the tribunal of the Roman Rota and *referendarius*, the official responsible for communicating to and advising the pope on petitions sent to him. Lelli became bishop of Feltre in 1462 and was translated to the see of Treviso in 1464. Pope Paul II (1464-1471), who valued him highly, made him a cardinal in 1465, but Lelli died in March of the following year before he could receive the red hat. He also did not live to see the publication of his edition of Jerome. He was buried in Rome in the church of Santa Maria Nuova, where his cousin, Gaspare de Teramo, had an epitaph placed on his tomb that commemorated Teodoro, the Bishop of Trevisio, as "highly experienced in divine and human law"—a phrase borrowed from Livy's characterization (1.18) of Numa Pompilius, successor to Romulus as king of Rome—and as *referendarius* to Paul II.³⁷

Gaspare financed the two-volume edition as a memorial to his cousin. The first volume opened with a dedicatory letter to Paul II by Matteo Palmiero (1423-1483) followed by the latter's Latin translation of the *Letter to Aristeas*, originally in Greek, which purports to tell the story of the origins of the Greek Septuagint translation of the Pentateuch for its inclusion in the famous ancient library of Alexandria. Palmiero was a friend of Lelli and a respected scholar and official at the Roman curia. The dedication of the translation to Paul

³⁶ Feder, *Studien*, 196; Sharpe, "Impressum apud Ruessinger," 16; Giovanni Andrea Bussi, *Prefazioni delle edizioni di Sweeneyhym e Pannartz prototipografi Romani*, ed. Massimo Miglio (Milan: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1978), 4. On Bussi, see *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960—), 15: 565-72, s.v. "Bussi, Giovanni Andrea," by Massimo Miglio, and Miglio's biography in Bussi, *Prefazioni*, xvii-xxix.

³⁷ Luigi Alpago-Novello, "Teodoro de' Lelli, vescovo di Feltre (1462-64) e di Treviso (1464-66)," *Archivio Veneto*, 5th series, 19 (1936): 238-61, esp. 238, 245, 246. For a summary of Lelli's life, see Sharpe, "Impressum apud Ruessinger," 24-26, and *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, 36: 506-509, s. v. "De Lellis (De' Lelli, Lelli), Teodoro," by D. Quagliani.

II served as a substitute for a dedicatory preface, which Lelli was not able to write.³⁸

A memorial to Lelli, most likely composed by his cousin as a “eulogy no doubt written to transform the work into a memorial edition,”³⁹ appears in the second column of the verso of the folio on which the *Letter to Aristeas* concludes and again a few folios later just before Lelli’s preface to the edition of Jerome’s letters. The tribute supplies credentials worthy of a humanist. Echoing Livy and the epitaph, it describes Lelli as “a man most experienced in his age in divine and human law” and then adds that he was also “famous for his eloquence.” He had a remarkable career in the Church. Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455), admiring his learning and virtue, appointed him to the Rota at an unprecedented young age. In connection with the appointment to the Rota, Lelli’s eulogist mentions his ability to make sound legal judgments as well as his personal integrity. Pius II used him as an envoy on the most difficult missions and made him Bishop of Feltre. Since “the superior examples of his virtue” became daily conspicuous in all he did, Paul II, impressed by his reputation, wanted him always to be at his side. The pontiff made use of his “advice and eloquence” in more important matters and put him in charge of the see of Trevisio with the intention of bestowing on him greater titles still. He would have done this if an early death had not carried off Lelli. After recounting the exalted esteem that he enjoyed, the eulogy portrays him as a worthy editor of Jerome: “Since among the other doctors of the Church he always admired the genius (*ingenium*) of Blessed Jerome and revered his holiness, he not only diligently sought out with astonishing zeal all of his works but also meditated on them, reading them fairly often.” He realized that Jerome’s letters were not well arranged; nor did they have any coherence among themselves. Consequently, he gathered them all into a “definite order” and explained them with “the most well-founded summaries” (*argumentis verissimis*). Owing to his innate humility, “the most learned man” did not identify himself as the author of these “little prefaces.”

³⁸ Sharpe, “Impressum apud Ruessinger,” 10, 13-14, 27-29. For an introduction to and translation of the *Letter to Aristeas*, see R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, 2 vols. (1913; reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 2: 83-122.

³⁹ Sharpe, “Impressum apud Ruessinger,” 27.

This tribute to Lelli is more than a eulogy, however. Printed twice in the edition, it not only communicates to readers the name of the editor, but it also reiterates the reasons why he should enjoy their confidence. He was all that a Renaissance editor could and should be: erudite, eloquent, and virtuous. Three popes confirmed his illustrious qualities. Lelli, moreover, was completely devoted to his author. Admiration for Jerome's *ingenium* and reverence for his holiness combines learning and piety. Creating an order for the texts and introducing them with *argumenta* represent his most enduring editorial contributions in the first several decades of print. Lelli's unsigned preface in the first volume, which we shall examine in Chapter 2, emphasizes in particular the tripartite structure that he imposed on Jerome's letters. He arranged them in accordance with the general categories of doctrine, biblical interpretation, and Christian morals.

Bussi characterized himself more modestly in the double preface, beginning in the first and recommencing in the second volume of his edition of Jerome's letters, dedicated to Paul II, the "glory of God's Church."⁴⁰ When Bussi called himself the "premature off-scouring of scholars" (*doctorum abortivus*), did he remember Jerome's self-deprecating reference in the letter to Desiderius (ep. 47) as *abortivus* and "the least of all Christians"?⁴¹ At the behest of some friends, the editor applied his diligence to make a few rather modest improvements (*emendatiusculae*) upon Lelli's edition. Bussi's "little gift" pales in comparison with the greatness that he ascribes to the papal patron of his edition, under whose pontificate books began to be printed in Rome.⁴²

Bussi, however, was clearly proud of his achievement. Whereas many approach the task of correcting books corrupted by the carelessness of scribes as an easy one, anyone who compared "our distinguished volumes of St. Jerome's nocturnal literary labours" (*nostra divi Hieronymi vigiliarum volumina praeclara*) with those books already in circulation would think otherwise of Bussi's editorial work. Those who realize that booksellers have corrupted Jerome's writings almost beyond intelligibility will perhaps gratefully acknowledge Bussi's accomplishment. The editor acknowledges the help of scholars, in

⁴⁰ Bussi, *Prefazioni*, 4.

⁴¹ Ibid, 3; Jerome: CSEL 54: 346.

⁴² Bussi, *Prefazioni*, 4, 5.

particular that of Theodore Gaza in restoring Greek passages, but the edition of Jerome's letters is clearly Bussi's. His readers should know how much he worked on it; he will be content if scholars will be interested in reading his modest publication (*operula*). Bussi encourages fathers to buy "these books"—the two volumes—for their sons, who in turn should study them carefully.⁴³

Bussi's edition, as well as most other incunabular editions of Jerome's letters, adopted Lelli's tripartite structure and with some modifications his more detailed taxonomy. While Sweynheym and Pannartz or Pannartz and Lauer did not do so, several other fifteenth-century printers reproduced Lelli's preface and his *argumenta*. This is evident in an edition printed in Parma in 1480 (Hain *8557; GW 12429), which was elegantly transcribed in two large volumes near and in Florence in 1483 and 1484,⁴⁴ as well as editions printed in Venice in 1476 (Hain *8556; GW 12426), 1488 (Hain *8558; GW 12430), and 1490 (Hain *8560; GW 12432). A Venetian printing of 1496 (Hain *8563; GW 12435) reproduced the *argumenta* without Lelli's preface. This served as the basis for another Venetian edition printed by Doninus Pincius after 1500 (Hain *8564).⁴⁵

Italy clearly led the way in printing Jerome's letters. The first large collection of Jerome's letters in translation was printed in Ferrara in 1497 (Hain 8566; GW 12437). It is not as comprehensive as the Latin editions, nor does this first anthology in Italian follow Lelli's order. It does, however, translate his *argumenta*, even if sometimes in abbreviated form.

Eventually, Jerome's letters were printed outside of Italy. The edition that Anton Koberger completed in 1495 in Nürnberg (Hain *8562; GW 12434) reproduced Lelli's preface. In Basel, Nicolaus Kesler produced three separate editions—in 1489 (Hain *8559; GW 12431), 1492 (Hain *8561; GW 12433), and 1497 (Hain *8565; GW 12436). The first two begin with the preface from the *editio princeps*; the second looks very much like a reprint of the first. Both are set in Gothic type with two columns per page. Both follow Bussi's modification of Lelli's classification; so too does the edition printed in

⁴³ Ibid., 6, 7, 9.

⁴⁴ BNF, Lat. 1890, Lat. 1891; de la Mare and Hellinga, "The First Book," 229.

⁴⁵ Cf. Goff, *Incunabula in American Libraries*, H-177, and GW, vol. 11: col. 56. Since the edition is considered to have been printed after 1500, GW does not assign it an incunable number.

1497. This third edition differs noticeably from its predecessors. The texts are set in Roman type and in long lines. Each of the three parts concludes with an *inventorium* comprised of an analytical index in alphabetical order as well as a table of contents for the part in question. The volume does not begin with Lelli's preface. A condensed version of this preface is printed at the end of Part 1.⁴⁶

The 1497 edition influenced several collections of Jerome's letters printed in France. Jacques Saccon, who worked in Lyon, printed two separate one-volume folio editions—in 1508 and 1518. In 1512, Poncet le Preux printed a three-volume octavo edition in Paris, and in the following year, in Lyon, Nicolas de Benedictis printed a folio edition in one volume. Saccon's versified colophon in the 1508 edition is an adaptation of Kesler's in the 1489 and 1492 editions. In both of his printings, Saccon placed the *inventorium* (index and table of contents) ahead of each of three parts. Le Preux did the same. De Benedictis, who reprinted Saccon's 1508 colophon, combined the three *inventoria* into one at the beginning of his edition.⁴⁷ All four French printings followed the arrangement of texts as revised in the third Basel edition and reproduced Lelli's *argumenta*. Saccon printed the Italian editor's preface, as condensed by Kesler, on the verso of the title page of the 1508 *Liber epistolarum sancti Hieronymi*. After 1508, the preface did not reappear in France.

Le Preux, like no previous printer of Jerome's letters, used the title page of the first volume to promote the edition. It bears a complex title that highlights the value of the edition's contents as well as the effort invested in producing it:

Epistolarum divi Hieronymi doctoris alioquin profundissimi. Necnon nostre fidei stabilimenti solidissimi Codicilli tres diligenti admodum labore pervigilique cura emuncti atque praemissis eorumdem repertoriis nuper calcographis haud iniucundis impressi. Quorum prior hic est.

Three little volumes of the letters of Saint Jerome, in other respects a most profound doctor and also a most firm support of our faith, corrected with assiduous effort and thoroughly attentive care, and with

⁴⁶ de la Mare and Hellinga, "The First Book," 234, 235-36. For the condensed preface, see *Liber epistolarum sancti Hieronymi* (Basel: Nicolaus Kesler, 1497), Part 1, a1v in the section entitled *INVENTARIUM PRIMAE PARTIS EPISTOLARVM SANCTI HIERONYMI*.

⁴⁷ de la Mare and Hellinga, "The First Book," 236-37.

inventories placed at the beginning of the same [volumes], recently printed with by no means unpleasant type. Of which this is the first.

The title page as the first page of a printed book developed gradually during the last four decades of the fifteenth century.⁴⁸ Many early printed books lacked title pages. The first printed page of the few incunabular editions of Jerome's letters that had title pages, such as the volumes printed by Kesler or Koberger, simply indicated that readers would find the letters within.

With his title *Le Preux* adds value to the letters, noting Jerome's theological and spiritual credentials. Peculiar words convey information about the material format of the edition and the care lavished on it. *Codicilii* can mean letters, notes, petitions, official rescripts, or appendices to a will. *Emuncti* is the past participle plural of *emungere*, the verb to blow or wipe one's nose; by extension it can mean keen or acute. Both words, peculiar as they may be, are typographically significant. The reference to *codicilii* signals "a striking change of format from the folio of earlier editions to octavo." Printing the texts in italic type made this change possible.⁴⁹ *Le Preux* wants readers to know that the three volumes, that is their printed contents, have been diligently "cleaned" or corrected. Advertising textual accuracy was a common feature of the title pages of early printed books.⁵⁰ The Parisian printer completes the description of the volumes by pointing out the aesthetic value of the printed product. The choice of italic type would make reading Jerome's letters a pleasant experience.

In 1520, two translations of a substantial collection of Jerome's letters appeared in print. In Paris, Guillaume Eustace printed *Les Epistres monseigneur saint Hierosme en françois*. This stood in the editorial tradition of Lelli, for it followed Lelli's detailed classifications of texts within his larger tripartite structure, even if it omitted some texts. Translations of the Italian editor's *argumenta* introduce the texts. Another Frenchman Joan (or Juan) Joffre, a native of Briançon became the leading printer in Valencia of his day, producing a variety of texts of high typographical quality. He published a collection of 49 letters, the *Epistolas de S. Hieronymo*, translated into Castilian by

⁴⁸ Margaret M. Smith, *The Title-Page: Its Early Development, 1460-1510* (London: The British Library, 2000).

⁴⁹ de la Mare and Hellinga, "The First Book," 236.

⁵⁰ Smith, *The Title-Page*, 106.

Juan de Molina.⁵¹ At least four subsequent editions appeared in print: one in Valencia in 1526 (not the work of Joffre) and three in Seville in 1532, 1537, and 1541. The last three appeared under the new title *Epistolae del glorioso doctor sant Hieronymo*.⁵²

The earliest editions of Jerome's letters that did not belong to the editorial tradition inaugurated by Lelli were printed by Johannes Mentelin in Strassburg and by his competitor Peter Schoeffer in Mainz. In 1470, Schoeffer printed a broadside advertising the merits and announcing the imminent publication of the *Jeronimianus*, which turned out to be an enormous folio volume. In all likelihood, Adrian Brielis, a Benedictine monk at the monastery of St. James in Mainz and editor of Jerome's *Epistolae*, composed the advertisement,⁵³ aimed at those "who are devoted to the glorious Jerome and delight in the splendour of this teaching." The book of letters "of the same glorious man and doctor and most stalwart champion of the Church," will be printed by Peter of Gernsheim and should be complete by Michaelmas. Schoeffer delivered on this promise; the colophon of the colossal *Jeronimianus* bears the date 7 September 1470. Brielis singles out three key selling points. First, with more than 200 letters or books, the *Jeronimianus* outdoes all previous editions, which included 70, 100, or 130 letters, give or take a few letters. To this end as many cathedral and monastic libraries as possible were consulted. Second, the edition boasts a *registracio placibilis*, a pleasant—today we might say "user-friendly"—system of classification that confines the welter of letters and books to a few headings. Finally, the *Jeronimianus* represents an edition that is as correct as possible; its accuracy is the product of "much toil."

This promotion or marketing of the edition at the pre-publication stage becomes all the more complex once the edition appeared in print. Schoeffer and Brielis cleverly appealed to two different audi-

⁵¹ F. J. Norton, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Printing in Spain and Portugal, 1501-1520* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 419; Juan Delgado Casado, *Diccionario de impresores españoles (siglos XV-XVII)*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Arco/Libros, 1996) 1: 347, no. 424. For a bibliographical description of the *Epistolae* see Norton, *A Descriptive Catalogue*, 439, no. 1213.

⁵² The 1526 edition that I consulted (Houghton 560.26.452F) lacked a title page, and therefore I could not determine whether it went out under the old or new title.

⁵³ Frank Falk, "Der gelehrte Korrektor Adrian O. S. B. der Peter Schöfferschen Druckerei zu Mainz," *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 16 (1899): 233-36; Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *Peter Schoeffer*, 92.

ences. Some copies began with a preface intended for a conspicuously ecclesiastical readership. Others had a preface tailored to presumably lay readers with humanist inclinations. The title of both prefaces was one and the same, emphasizing the credit due to the printer: "Introduction to the letters of blessed Jerome brought into print by the man renowned in this craft, Peter Schoeffer of Gernsheim."

The clerical introduction (Hain *8553; GW 12424) addressed itself to "all of the ecclesiastical estate zealously dedicated to the truth." These churchmen are worthy of and ought lovingly to embrace the writings of the four holy doctors: Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome. With these four walls built

upon the solid foundation of gospel truth, reaching towards heaven (*in sublime*) under the guidance of the Holy Spirit with a thousand shields and all the weapons of the brave hanging on them, Holy Mother Church, fortified on all sides and walking in the midst of her dwelling in the innocence of her heart, caresses in the bosom of peace the children she has borne for her spouse, who are allied by the bonds of unity and charity.

Thus protected, the Church does not fear the onslaught of any foe. Without offence to the other doctors, one may say that the writings of Jerome deserve more careful attention from all the devout and from every expert.

The other introduction (Hain *8554; GW 12425) had in view "all persons of the Christian religion who desire not only to take pleasure in reading famous authors but also to pour into the soul a type of, as it were, heavenly food." It is "fitting for them to embrace with the most diligent zeal the writings of those, so to speak, four luminaries: Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome." These writings are "most elegant" and glow "with every abundance and ornament of speech." Their subject is the irrefutable truth, and they show the way that alone leads human beings to "the safe and peaceful harbour," Jesus Christ, the immortal Son of God. Also applying an architectural metaphor to the four doctors, this introduction envisions them as "highly fortified towers constructed on the mighty foundation of gospel truth." Hedged in by these towers, "our Catholic faith dwells most securely in her citadel" and "caresses in her bosom the children whom she bore in concord and who are united by the bond of charity to her spouse." Far be it from her to fear

“any kind of torments or contrivance.” Although all four doctors are outstanding, Jerome is superior in “the abundance of speech and sweetness of discourse,” so much so that the words that flow from his mouth seem sweeter than honey. Brielis, the editor, is so bold as to urge everyone to read through his works since he can scarcely believe that anyone could be virtuous, Christian, and proficient in Latin without constantly reading Jerome. The splendour evident in all of his many books is no less elegant (*ornatus*) than that of “our orthodox faith, which he discusses everywhere.” “For these reasons,” writes Brielis, “I believe that this volume of his letters should be especially valued and read.”

Both introductions discuss at varying lengths editorial decisions about what texts to include and details about the classification of texts. These we shall consider in Chapter 2. For the purposes of this chapter, it suffices to note that both introductions address the issue of the volume’s accuracy, its *correctio* or *castigatio*. Brielis warns both his clerical and lay readers against taking offence too quickly. To the former he says that even if the improved reading (*correctio*) cannot be accepted in every case, we should anticipate this since no one is perfect. There is no doubt, however, about the serious work spent on this undertaking of which the careful reader will approve. He enjoins lay readers to examine everything in detail instead of raising criticisms. For in this very revision (*in hac ipsa castigatione*) he put to use all the hard work and attention that his “feeble mind” could muster.

In the incunabular period, readers had access to Jerome’s letters printed individually or in small collections. His famous letter to Eustochium on virginity (ep. 22) appeared in print several times in the last decade of the fifteenth century in German and Italian translation (GW 12439-12441), or in Latin combined with Jerome’s lives of Paul the first hermit and Malchus the monk (GW 12456, 12459, 12460), or simply with the life of Paul (GW 12457, 12458). The *De viris illustribus*, Jerome’s catalogue of Christian writers which included three non-Christians—Seneca, Philo, and Josephus—and which appeared in the large incunabular folio editions of the *Epistolae*, was printed together with non-Hieronymian texts or on its own as early as 1470 (GW 12451-12453). The first printed small selection of Jerome, comprising two texts, seems to have come from the press of Arnold ter Hoernen in Cologne around 1473. It consisted of the

epitaph on Paula (ep. 108), an account, addressed to Eustochium, of the life and death of her Roman aristocratic mother and ascetic devotee of Jerome, followed by the *Life of Paul* (GW 12454). Various other combinations were on offer, such as the letter to Nepotian on the duties of the clergy (ep. 52) and the epitaph on Nepotian sent to his uncle Heliodorus, Bishop of Altinum (ep. 60) printed by Peter van Os in Zwolle in 1491 and again in 1500 (GW 12443, 12444), or the letter to Paulinus (ep. 53) and the preface to the Pentateuch addressed to Desiderius printed in Salamanca, Toulouse, and Paris between 1487 at the earliest and 1496 (GW 12446-12449).

The variety of anthologies continued into the sixteenth century. Antoine du Four, a Dominican and Bishop of Marseilles from 1507 until his death in 1509, produced a selection of six texts at the request of Anne of Brittany, Queen of France.⁵⁴ It was printed in at least two editions. Of one, entitled *Les Epistres Saint Hierosme*, we know only that it was printed in Paris; Jean de la Garde printed the other edition, *Les epistres saint Jerosme*, in Paris in 1518. The publication began with a spurious letter to Susanna, an adulteress, rebuking her and calling her to penance. Jerome also rebukes the deacon Sabinianus for his sexual misdeeds (ep. 147), admonishes a woman and her daughter living in Gaul (ep. 117), and writes to his spiritual daughter Asella (ep. 45). Then follows Valerius' advice against marrying addressed to Rufinus. In fact, Walter Map, an English scholar in royal and ecclesiastical service who died as the archdeacon of Oxford in 1209 or 1210, is the author of the misogynistic and anti-matrimonial *Disuasio Valerii ad Rufinum philosophum ne uxorem ducat*. The pseudonymous brief against marriage, influenced by but more radical than the anti-feminism of Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum*, formed part of Map's *De nugis curialium* or *Courtiers' Trifles*. The separate circulation of the *Disuasio* in many manuscripts betray its popularity, trading on medieval misogyny.⁵⁵ The *Testament saint iherosme*, a forged

⁵⁴ On du Four, see Jacques Quétif and Jacques Echard, eds., *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum recensiti, notisque historicis et criticis illustrati*, 2 vols. (Paris: J. B. Christophorus Ballard and Nicolaus Simart, 1719-1721), 2: 21-22, s. v. "F. Antonius du Four;" *Dictionnaire de biographie française* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1933—), 11: col. 1423, s. v. "Du Four (Antoine)."

⁵⁵ Philippe Delahaye, "Le dossier anti-matrimonial de l'*Adversus Jovinianum* et son influence sur quelques écrits latins du XIIe siècle," *Medieval Studies* 13 (1951): 80-82; Walter Map, *De nugis curialium: Courtiers' Trifles*, ed. and trans. M. R. James, rev. C. N.

account of Jerome's death by Pseudo-Eusebius of Cremona concludes du Four's anthology.

When we cross into the Holy Roman Empire, we encounter many small editions of Jerome. In Leipzig in 1504, Jakob Thanner printed separately the letter on honouring one's parents, a spurious work, and the letter to Innocent (ep. 1) on the woman falsely accused of adultery who survived seven blows from an executioner's sword. Thanner printed the *De honorandis parentibus epistola* again in 1509.

Printing selections of Jerome's letters served a pedagogical purpose. In 1516, the young Heinrich Bullinger, the future leader in succession to Huldreich Zwingli of the Protestant Church in Zurich, arrived in Emmerich, a town on the lower Rhine, to continue his schooling. At the humanist Latin school in Emmerich, along with the letters of Cicero and Pliny and the poetry of Virgil and Horace students read letters by Jerome and poems by the Carthusian monk Baptista Mantuanus.⁵⁶ Jerome was also suitable to humanist instruction in universities.

In 1508, the itinerant German humanist Johannes Rhagius Aesticampianus took up a teaching position at the University of Leipzig, where he remained until 1511. At Leipzig, he lectured on Jerome, using his anthology printed in 1508 by Melchior Lotter, *Septem divi Hieronymi epistolae ad vitam mortalium instituendam accomodatissime [sic]*.⁵⁷ In the preface, Aesticampianus notes that he has undertaken to expound Jerome's letters so that "our German youth" might learn from this author an abundance of eloquence (*copia benedicendi*) and the method of living honourably and might be led to "the holiest deeds of virtue." He has selected short and profitable letters from the correspondence of "the most eloquent and, furthermore, most holy Jerome," by which the saint cured spiritual sickness in his own day. The remedies of Jerome, "a sort of Christian Hercules" who "boldly subdued the most hideous monsters of the heretics and with

L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), xviii, xlvii. For the text of the *Disuasio*, see Map, *De nugis curialium*, 288-311.

⁵⁶ Kurt Jakob Rüetschi, "Bullinger and the Schools," in *Architect of the Reformation: An Introduction to Heinrich Bullinger, 1504-1575*, ed. Bruce Gordon and Emidio Campi (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2004), 216.

⁵⁷ Ulrich Bubenheimer, *Thomas Müntzer: Herkunft und Bildung* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989), 155. On Aesticampianus, see *Neue Deutsche Biographie* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1953—), 1: 92-93, s. v. "Aesticampianus, Johannes Rhagius," by Heinrich Grimm.

his club especially smashed the pestilential monsters of vice,” are especially necessary “in our times, since they are perverted by false beliefs and corrupted by the basest morals possible.” In an afterword, Aesticampianus compares the seven letters of his anthology to the seven wonders of the world; they address practically every situation of human life.⁵⁸ The anthology comprised, to use its titles, Jerome’s letters to Niceas on the vicissitudes of letter writing (ep. 8), to Nepotian on the life of the clergy (ep. 52), to Rusticus on the monastic life (ep. 125), to Laeta on the education of children (ep. 107), to Domnio against a babbling monk (ep. 50), and to Marcella concerning Onasus in which Jerome assails his detractors (ep. 40), and the argument against marriage attributed to Valerius.

The idea of publishing letters by Jerome deemed appropriate to various conditions of life remained popular in Leipzig. In 1514, 1515, 1518, and 1521, Thanner printed the same anthology of four letters: *Quattuor divi Hieronymi epistole ad vitam mortalium instituendam accomodatissime at mira scatentes eruditione hoc contentur libello*. The pamphlet contains letters highly suited for teaching lessons about human life, all the while teeming with erudition. All four letters were part of Aesticampianus’ anthology: the letters to Niceas, Nepotian, Rusticus and Laeta (ep. 8, 52, 107, 125). Terse *argumenta* on the title page summarize the letters. In the first, Jerome “very gently will reprove” neglecting one’s duty to reply to letters, “in which we repeatedly sin;” in the second, he will lead priests back to a life a virtue; in the third “he will reform monks, who have fallen away from a holy life, according to their former rule of life;” in the fourth, he will advise parents how to raise and teach their children. The title page establishes the relevance of the letters to contemporary readers, especially in the first and fourth *argumenta*. The first *argumentum* addresses readers in the first person plural; the fourth applies Jerome’s letter, originally intended to advise Laeta, the Roman noblewoman and daughter-in-law of Paula, how to raise her daughter, to all parents and all children. Perhaps the second and third *argumenta* deliberately correspond to contemporary demands for clerical and monastic reform.

⁵⁸ *Septem divi Hieronymi epistolae ad vitam mortalium instituendam accomodatissime* [sic] (Leipzig: Melchior Lotter, 1508), A4r, A5r, H5v.

To the west in Wittenberg, Johannes Rhau-Grunenberg printed a short anthology for Johann Lang in 1515. By printing Martin Luther's incomplete edition of the *Theologia Deutsch* (1516), Grunenberg earned the distinction of being the first to print the future Reformer's books.⁵⁹ Lang and Luther were both at the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt until Johann Staupitz, their provincial, sent them to the University of Wittenberg in 1511. Between 1512 and 1515 Lang lectured on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Faculty of Arts and taught Greek.⁶⁰ He also lectured on Jerome. Intended in the first instance to complement his lectures, the anthology consisted of Jerome's letters to Magnus, a Roman orator (ep. 70), and to Laeta (ep. 107) as well as the letter comparing the merits of Jerome and Augustine by the Italian humanist Francesco Filelfo (d. 1481).

In the preface, dated 10 June 1515, Lang dedicated the edition to Heinrich Stackmann, who had arrived from the University of Leipzig in 1512, formally joined the Faculty of Arts in Wittenberg the following year, and served as Dean of the Faculty in 1515.⁶¹ The edition represented "a declaration of war against scholasticism at Wittenberg."⁶² Lang believes the two letters of Jerome are "as elegant as they are pure and dignified." The first defends (pagan) secular literature against those who think or rather insist that it should be absolutely forbidden among Christians. These opponents of secular learning read nothing but William of Ockham, Duns Scotus, the fifteenth-century Thomist Joannes Capreolus, and other writers of that ilk. For them the authority of Ockham, Scotus, and Capreolus surpasses, respectively that of Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose. Like a good humanist, Lang privileges the Fathers at the expense of the scholastic doctors. He briefly explains the function of the second

⁵⁹ Maria Grossmann, "Wittenberg Printing, Early Sixteenth Century," in *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies*, vol. 1, ed. Carl S. Meyer (Saint Louis: Foundation for Reformation Research, 1970), 72-73; Grossmann, *Humanism in Wittenberg, 1485-1517* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1975), 98.

⁶⁰ Jens-Martin Kruse, *Universitätstheologie und Kirchenreform: die Anfänge der Reformation in Wittenberg, 1516-1522* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2002), 43-44.

⁶¹ On Stackmann, see Nikolaus Müller, "Die Wittenberger Bewegung 1521 und 1522," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 7 (1909-1910): 374-81.

⁶² Karl Bauer, *Die Wittenberger Universitätstheologie und die Anfänge der Deutschen Reformation* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1928), 49.

letter: it “paints as with a brush a method of study and life, and so well that nothing is lacking.”⁶³

Lang does not mention the letter by Filelfo in his preface, but its inclusion in the anthology suggests agreement with the Italian humanist’s assessment of Augustine and Jerome. In all branches of philosophy, Augustine was more intelligent, skilled, and subtle. Jerome was his superior in eloquence rather than doctrine. He was more proficient in Greek and Hebrew than Augustine. In life, Jerome was uncouth (*horridus*), but Augustine was gentle.⁶⁴ Perhaps, as Jens-Martin Kruse believes, Lang wanted to draw attention to the significance of Augustine in matters of substance alongside Jerome’s capabilities in style. In 1516, Luther expressed his preference for Augustine against Erasmus’ sympathy for Jerome.⁶⁵ His partiality was part of an older Renaissance debate originating with Petrarch, who, as a champion of Augustine, attacked Giovanni d’Andrea in the 1340s for his glorification of Jerome. In February 1518, Johann Eck a theologian at Ingolstadt who later that year attacked Luther, agreed with Luther about the superiority of Augustine. After appealing to Filelfo’s authority, Eck in a letter to Erasmus urged him to read Augustine carefully to realize how shameful it was “to dare to prefer any of the doctors to Augustine’s erudition.”⁶⁶

Grunenberg printed two editions of Jerome in 1517. One contained only his letter to Paulinus (ep. 53) on “all the books of the divine history.” The other was a collection of ten letters edited by Stackmann with a familiar title: *Decem Divi Hieronymi Epistolae ad vitam mortalium instituendam accomodatissimae* [sic]. Aesticampianus, who began teaching at Wittenberg in 1517, used both anthologies in his courses on Jerome. Thomas Müntzer recorded the teacher’s commentary in his own copy of the letter to Paulinus.⁶⁷

Unlike the pamphlets printed by Thanner, Stackmann’s anthology did supply information about the relevance of its contents. In his preface, Lang wrote that he had the two letters of Jerome printed so

⁶³ *Quae hoc libello habentur: Divi Hieronymi epistola ad magnum urbis Oratorem elegantiss[ima]. Eiusdem ad Athletam de filiae educatione. F. Philelphi epistola de Hieronymo & Augustino*, ed. Johann Lang (Wittenberg: Johannes Grunenberg, 1515), A1v.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, B6r.

⁶⁵ Kruse, *Universitätstheologie und Kirchenreform*, 48.

⁶⁶ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 137; Allen 3: 211, ep. 769.

⁶⁷ Bubenheimer, *Thomas Müntzer*, 157-70, 276-97.

that Stackmann might expound them for his students. Stackmann published his more extensive anthology for the purpose of his lectures.⁶⁸ Besides reproducing all seven texts in Aesticampianus' anthology, Stackmann added Jerome's letters to Desiderius, inviting him to visit the Holy Land (ep. 47) and to Tranquillinus on how to read Origen (ep. 62) as well as the spurious letter to Desiderius on the major ecclesiastical writers. Stackmann's preface, addressed to a Heinrich Rommel and dated 21 February, lacks the polemical drive of Lang's. The editor's purpose was consolatory. He wanted to present Rommel with something that would ease his physical pain.⁶⁹ Jerome cuts a rather traditional figure in the preface. He is a "most vigorous general of the army of the devout (*strenuissimus religiosae militiae dux*), a pinnacle of the Church, a noble repository of Christian doctrine," who "distinguished himself in devotion, laid low heretics, and possessed in the highest degree sobriety, chastity, holiness, and sound doctrine, all of which ought to exist in a bishop as a teacher and apostle."⁷⁰

In Vienna, Johann Singriener (Singrenius), who began printing independently as of 1514 and emerged as the most important printer of the city in his day, produced several Hieronymian texts.⁷¹ The edition of Jerome's polemic against Jovinian along with the two apologies to Pammachius (epp. 48, 49) appeared in 1516.⁷² Albuin Grefinger, who as of 1516 served several times as dean of philosophy and theology at the University of Vienna, edited an anthology of fifteen letters that Singrenius printed in 1520.⁷³ The title page advertises its usefulness. The volume includes "some of the choicer and shorter letters of St. Jerome, packed with amazing knowledge, for

⁶⁸ Müller, "Die Wittenberger Bewegung," 377.

⁶⁹ Helmar Junghans, "Die Widmungsvorrede bei Martin Luther," in *Lutheriana: Zum 500. Geburtstag Martin Luthers von den Mitarbeitern der Weimarer Ausgabe*, ed. Gerhard Hammer and Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen (Cologne, Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1984), 44.

⁷⁰ *Decem Diui Hieronymi epistolae ad vitam mortalium instituendam accomodatissimae* [sic], ed. Heinrich Stackmann (Wittenberg: Johann Grunenberg, 1517), A2r.

⁷¹ On Singriener, see Michael Denis, *Wiens Buchdruckergeschicht bis M.D.L.X* (Vienna: Christian Friedrich Wappler, 1782), ix-x; and Josef Benzing, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1982), 485.

⁷² *Diui Hieronymi contra Iovinianum hereticum libri duo, cum Apologetico eiusdem in defensionem librorum contra praedicum Iovinianum* (Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1516).

⁷³ On Grefinger, see Denis, *Wiens Buchdruckergeschicht*, 214.

the purpose of instilling holy conduct and a Christian life, fitting not only for young people but also for those of a more advanced age.”

Grefinger’s preface concentrates on Christian youth. Without the best parents as well as famous and most virtuous authors young people could not receive a sound education. They needed authors whom they could read daily, upon whom they could meditate, and from whom they could draw helpful teachings, which they, inspired not simply by human beings but also by God, could absorb so that their hearts could burn with divine love and their minds be restored to pristine peace. Fortunately, “among that mighty throng of theologians” stood out “that aged and bearded Jerome, easily the prince and standard-bearer of theologians.” His learning, abundant speech, elegant style, and holy life were legendary. Yet, Grefinger complains, too few of his contemporaries were interested in his holiness or the “deeper meanings of his writings.” Convinced that pagan authors would not contribute adequately to the spiritual goals of education, the editor admonishes a “zealous youth” to choose Jerome, to study him, to make him their intimate companion so that by reading him they might fashion their hearts into “the library of the Holy Spirit.” Let them prefer Jerome to Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Terence, and all the other philosophers and poets. He can more quickly, more genuinely, and more properly instruct them in the ways of virtue, of Christian holiness, of prudent and eloquent speech and, above all, he can restrain rank minds at a licentious age. Grefinger explains that he has chosen some of the more learned and shorter of Jerome’s letters, “packed with astounding knowledge of history and of most solemn sayings, which we considered more beneficial for young people.” The editor ends by commending Singrenius for wanting to print the letters with the most beautiful type and “cleansed from every blemish”—we again encounter the past participle of *emungere*!—for “the common benefit of students.” Readers owe a debt of gratitude to Singrenius, “who for your convenience does not cease daily to print texts that are new and most worthy of reading.”⁷⁴

Despite Grefinger’s doubts about pagan authors, the anthology begins with the letter to Magnus, the Roman orator (ep. 70). The

⁷⁴ *Contenta in hoc libello. Insunt aliquot Diui Hieronymi selectiores ac breuiores epistolae, mira eruditione refertae, pro instituendis sanctis moribus, ac vita Christiana, non modo iuventuti, verum & proveciori aetati accommodae*, ed. Albuin Grefinger (Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1520), i verso—ii recto.

next several letters—to Nepotian, Paulinus, Heliodorus, and Rusticus (epp. 52, 58, 60, 125)—as well as the penultimate one to Niceas (ep. 8) appeared, as we have seen, in earlier anthologies. Grefinger selected five letters to women. Three of these are to Marcella, Jerome's aristocratic patron and disciple, on the illness of Blesilla, Eustochium's sister (ep. 38), in gratitude for gifts that she sent (ep. 44), and on the advantages of the countryside (ep. 43). In the other two, Jerome thanks Eustochium for her gifts (ep. 31) and argues the case of persevering in virginity for the benefit of Demetrias (ep. 130). The letter to Castrutius on his blindness (ep. 68) as well as the letters to Chrysogonus the monk (ep. 9) and the deacon Julian of Aquileia (ep. 6) also found their way into the anthology.

In the early 1520s, Singrenius continued to turn out Hieronymian texts. The letter to Paulinus (ep. 53) by "St. Jerome, thrice the greatest teacher of the Church" appeared in 1520. In the next year, followed the spurious homily on the prodigal son, "written in an exceedingly elegant style and replete with manifold erudition." The *Divi Hieronymi Libellus, de optime genere interpretandi, Ad Pammachium*, Jerome's letter to Pammachius on the best way to translate (ep. 57), came out in 1523.⁷⁵ In the same year, Singrenius printed an anthology of three prefaces to Latin translations by Jerome of Old Testament books. An introductory comment (*argumentum*) appears at the head of the preface to Chronicles, observing that in some codices someone or other assembled a preface out of a "fragment" of another preface. The entire *argumentum* reproduced that of Erasmus in his first edition of Jerome.⁷⁶

Before *Les Epistres monseigneur saint Hierosme en francois* (1520), perhaps the most extensive Hieronymian anthology of the early sixteenth century was that printed by Willem Vorsterman in Antwerp in April 1515. It consists of (1) twelve brief familiar letters, (2) Jerome's various prologues to the books of the Bible, (3) a series of ten other missives, and (4) three texts aimed at the heretic Vigilantius, who assailed the cult of the saints: Jerome's letters to Vigilantius, enjoining

⁷⁵ *Divi Hieronymi, ter maximi Christianae ecclesiae magistri, protreptica epistola ac paraenetica epistola ad Paulinum* (Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1520); *Inest huic libello homilia Divi Hieronymi de filio prodigio ad Damasum papam oppido quam eleganti stilo conscripta & multivaria eruditione referta* (Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1521); *Divi Hieronymi Libellus, de optime genere interpretandi, Ad Pammachium* (Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1523).

⁷⁶ *Divi Hieronymi ter maximi Christianae religionis Magistri, Prologi tres* (Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1523), A3r; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 8r.

him to be silent (ep. 61), and to the priest Riparius, requesting the writings of Vigilantius (ep. 109), as well as Jerome's polemic *Adversus Vigilantium*. The addition of the prologues was innovative since they did not appear together in previously printed collections of all of Jerome's letters. The familiar letters comprise many of Jerome's earliest letters, such as the one to Niceas and his first missives to Pope Damasus (epp. 15, 16). The letters in the third section are addressed to Paulinus (epp. 53, 58, 85), Nepotian (ep. 52), Rusticus (ep. 125), Heliodorus (epp. 14, 60), Pammachius (ep. 57), and Domnio (ep. 50).

The preface, dated 16 March 1515, addresses students: all beginners thirsting for the liberal arts (*bonae artes*). It opens with copious praise of the pursuit of divine wisdom (*divina sapientia*), no doubt a humanist term for theology. This wisdom, learned from Scripture, ranks first among the liberal arts and helps human beings attain the "goal of everlasting happiness." The "principal guide to life" (*praecipua vitae magistra*) teaches the art of living well, supplying an abundance of all the virtues, blotting out every stain of vice, burning off (*consumens*) the slag of sin. The unnamed editor was aware that famous contemporaries had published eloquent and charming books, but these offered not the slightest instruction about the moral and spiritual life (*ad bene beateque vivendum*). Consequently he thought it would be highly beneficial to provide students with something graced with Ciceronian eloquence and brimming over with "true, solid, and holy teaching and, moreover, wise sayings (*sententiae*)." The works of Jerome, "the most blessed father and illustrious doctor," which surpassed everything else in grace, purity, and utility, were the first to spring to mind. The commendation of Jerome and his writings continues:

For what—and not even Valla refrains from saying so—could be more eloquent than our Jerome? What more like the father of eloquence? What more accomplished in oratory (*magis oratorium*)? What more devoted to learning? What more perspicacious? What more magnificent? For his sort of eloquence is concise and clear, and although it sparkles with Ciceronian purity, it abounds in aphorisms. Furthermore, the sequence of topics is impressive, and one thing depends on another. Finally, whatever theme he takes up is either the end of the previous idea or the beginning of the following one. The distinguished orator and poet, Erasmus of Rotterdam, supports this view, saying: "And if we Christians are more impressed by examples taken from Christians,

I would not hesitate to offer Jerome as one to stand for the many. For his learning is so varied and profound that, in relation to him, others scarcely seem to swim (as one says) or to have had any education. Again, so great is his manner of speaking, so considerable his authority and acuity, so massive and manifold his apparatus of metaphors that you would say that compared with him the others are Seriphian frogs.⁷⁷

The editor has borrowed from the preface to the fourth book of Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantiae*. The Italian humanist asked: "What can be more eloquent than Jerome himself? What more accomplished in oratory? What—even if he often would like to hide this—more particular about speaking well, more devoted to learning, more perspicacious?"⁷⁸ Besides employing the structure of Valla's rhetorical question, the editor of the Antwerp preface has adopted the neuter comparative adjectives: *eloquentius*, *magis oratorium*, *studiosius*, *observantius*. The debt to Valla, mentioned parenthetically, is typographically less impressive, however, than the acknowledged quotation from the esteemed Erasmus.

The reference to Erasmus is a fascinating one. It is, as far as I know, the only appeal to his authoritative assessment of Jerome in an edition of Jerome before the publication of his own edition a year later in 1516. The quotation comes from the preface to the earliest version of the *Adages*, the *Adagiorum collectanea*, first printed in Paris in 1500.

The preface in the Antwerp edition does not quote Erasmus accurately, however.⁷⁹ It represents Erasmus' admiration for Jerome's diction as *tanta phrasis*, not *tanta dicendi phrasis*. Was this simply a mistake or the deliberate omission of a superfluous reference to speaking (*dicere*)? Another omission occurs in the same final sentence. As Erasmus explains in the *Adages* (I.v.31), "Seriphian frogs" was said of the dumb and of those completely inept at singing and speaking.⁸⁰ The Seriphian frogs that he has in mind in the preface to the *Collectanea* are not unspecified others, but "other theologians." The omission of "theologians" may have been a prudent one. Elsewhere in his preface, Erasmus does not shy away from pointing out more

⁷⁷ *Aliquot familiares epistole beati Hieronimi* (Antwerp: Willem Vosterman, 1515), 2r.

⁷⁸ Lorenzo Valla, *Opera omnia*, 2 vols. (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1962), 1: 119.

⁷⁹ For the original passage from Erasmus, see Allen 1: 292-93 (ep. 126).

⁸⁰ ASD II-1: 504.

explicitly the contrast between humanist rhetoric and scholastic theology,⁸¹ but the editor of the Antwerp anthology does not pursue this strategy.

Erasmus' commendation of Jerome's eloquence and erudition was sufficient, and, presumably, it was worth quoting because "the distinguished orator and poet" wrote it. In advertising in humanist fashion the merits of Jerome to students of the liberal arts, the anthology allies itself with Europe's rising humanist star. A quotation from the eminent collector of ancient proverbial wisdom lends support to the anthology. It helps supply the edition with authoritative humanist credentials. Did, in addition, the author of the anthology's preface think it was appropriate to mention Erasmus because by the end of 1514, as we shall see, it was public knowledge that Erasmus was preparing an edition of Jerome?

In 1533, Vorsterman printed another anthology of Jerome, *Divi Hieronymi epistolae aliquot, Argumentis, & Scholijs illustratae, ad maiorem studiosorum vtilitatem selectae*. Students again were the intended audience. The unidentified editor does not mention Erasmus. Nevertheless, the volume bears the influence of Erasmus. Some of the *scholia* on Jerome's letters indicate that the editor has borrowed from or corrected the *scholia* in Erasmus' edition of Jerome.⁸²

Erasmus' Jerome: Genesis, Promotion, Proliferation

As Hervé Savon noted a generation ago, the incunabular editions of Jerome's letters have for a long time remained in the shadow of Erasmus' edition.⁸³ He certainly used them. A look at Erasmus' *scholia* in manuscript reveals that he consulted the editions printed by Schoeffer, by Kesler in 1489 or 1492, and by Saccon in 1508, as well as an unspecified Roman edition. Given the many references to the edition printed by Saccon, this may have served as Erasmus' base

⁸¹ CWE 1: 263-64 (ep. 126).

⁸² For a more detailed study of the two anthologies printed by Vorsterman, see Hilmar M. Pabel, "Erasmus, Willem Vorsterman, and the Printing of St. Jerome's Letters," *Quaerendo* 37 (2007): 267-90.

⁸³ Hervé Savon, "Le *De vera circumcissione* du Prêtre Eutrope et les premières éditions imprimées des *Lettres* de Saint Jérôme," *Revue d'histoire des textes* 10 (1980): 168.

text.⁸⁴ The Roman edition was either the 1470 edition printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz or the edition printed by Pannartz and Lauer in 1476/1479. In an assessment (*censura*) of a letter on virginity wrongly attributed to Jerome, Erasmus notes that even the “Roman edition” denies Jerome’s authorship.⁸⁵ The 1468 edition attributes the letter to Jerome, but Bussi, the editor, changed his mind by 1470. Savon argued that Erasmus’ reading of another spurious text, *De vera circumcissione*, was based primarily on the text in the edition printed in Parma in 1480 or a subsequent edition with the same reading and secondarily on the Mainz edition of 1470. Benedetto Clausi has demonstrated that in several places Erasmus’ reading of the *Adversus Iovinianum* coincides with the text established by Adrian Brielis in Schoeffer’s printing. That Erasmus consulted this edition is obvious when he cites a reading in *prima aeditione Maguntinensi* in a *scholion* on the *De viris illustribus*. He must have thought that the edition printed in Mainz was the *editio princeps*.⁸⁶

These examples confirm Pierre Petitmengin’s claim that when preparing an edition of previously printed texts Erasmus worked from a *Vorlage* or printed base text.⁸⁷ This was a common method in editing among humanists, who began with a printed base text, the *lectio recepta*, and corrected it against manuscript readings wherever these editors believed these readings represented an improvement.⁸⁸ In principle, Erasmus understood the importance of consulting manuscripts, but “he did not draw the inference that manuscripts should be systematically *collated*.” Nor did he take the trouble to find the best manuscripts. Researching textual variants was not one of his strengths.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ Fritz Husner, “Die Handschrift der Scholien des Erasmus von Rotterdam zu den Hieronymusbriefen,” in *Festschrift Gustav Binz* (Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co., 1935), 144-45.

⁸⁵ *Opera* (1516), 2: 49v.

⁸⁶ Savon, “Le *De vera circumcissione*,” 193-95; Benedetto Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre: L’edizione erasmiana delle Lettere di Gerolamo* (Soveria Manelli: Rubbettino, 2000), 158-67; *Opera* (1516), 1: 140v.

⁸⁷ Pierre Petitmengin, “Comment étudier l’activité d’Érasme éditeur de textes antiques?,” in *Colloquia Erasmiana Turonensia*, 2 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 1: 218.

⁸⁸ E. J. Kenney, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 18-19, 59.

⁸⁹ D. F. S. Thomson, “Erasmus and Textual Scholarship in the Light of Sixteenth-Century Practice,” in *Erasmus of Rotterdam: The Man and the Scholar*, ed. J. Spera-Weiland and W. Th. M. Frijhoff (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988), 161 (quotation),

At the end of the incunabular period, in a letter written in Paris in 1498 to Robert Gaguin Erasmus supplies the first recorded hint of a critical reading of Jerome. He is not entirely sure who the *Cereales* and the *Anabasi* are in Jerome's *Apology against Rufinus*.⁹⁰ On 11 December 1500, he reports from Orléans to Jacob Batt, the hero of the *Antibarbari* and tutor to Adolph of Burgundy, the son of Anna van Borssele, Lady of Veere, that he is trying to "scrape together" enough money to buy clothes, "the complete works of Jerome, on whom I am preparing a commentary," and some Greek books. This is the first mention of his editorial project.⁹¹ Perhaps the next day, Erasmus writes again to Batt, asking him to encourage Anna van Borssele to fund the restoration of a corrupted Jerome that he equates with a restoration of "true theology." Batt should impress upon the potential aristocratic patroness that Erasmus is embarking on a great enterprise, namely the restoration of "all of Jerome," who had been "corrupted, mutilated, and brought into disorder by the ignorance of theologians—for among his writings I have discovered many spurious and counterfeit texts," and the restoration of the Greek passages in Jerome. Erasmus is so bold to claim that he will make accessible aspects of the ancient world as well as an "ingenuity" that has so far escaped the comprehension of all.⁹² Back in Paris a few days later, he informs another correspondent: "I have long had a burning desire to write a commentary on the letters of Jerome; and some god is now firing my spirit and impelling me to dare to contemplate this massive enterprise, never before attempted by anyone." What impels him to comment on Jerome is "the goodness of the saintly man who of all Christians was by common consent the best scholar and best writer." Everyone ought to memorize his works, yet "only a few read them and fewer still respect them, while fewest of all understand

emphasis in the original, 169; Adolfo Etchegaray Cruz, "Erasmus, editor crítico de la patrología latina," *Boletín de la Biblioteca de Menéndez Pelayo* 44 (1968): 106, 115.

⁹⁰ CWE 1: 143, ep. 67. In his *scholia* on the *Apology*, Erasmus observes that by *cereales* Jerome means messengers, just as the goddess Ceres dispatched Triptolemus to scatter wheat throughout the entire world. Jerome uses *anabasi* to refer to the messengers who travel all the more quickly on winged chariots (*conscensis curribus*) or horses. The Greek word *anabasis* means ascent, and thus we have another allusion to Triptolemus, who in a winged chariot scattered seed from on high. See *Opera* (1516), 3: 113v.

⁹¹ CWE 1: 295, ep. 138. On Batt, see CEBR 1: 100-101.

⁹² Allen 1: 326, 328-29, ep. 139.

them.”⁹³ In 1501, he tells Antoon van Bergen, Abbot of St. Bertin at Saint-Omer, of his aim to restore “Jerome’s books” and to elucidate them with commentaries, for the Church considers that Jerome alone, with his perfect grasp of sacred and pagan learning, can be read by everyone but understood only by the most learned scholars.⁹⁴

Erasmus’ admiration for Jerome, apparent while a young monk in the Augustinian house at Steyn, eventually nurtured a serious scholarly enterprise. The writings of the Church Father, who stood for the union of pagan and Christian erudition, needed to be purified of textual corruption and required a commentary. When did Erasmus decide to become Jerome’s editor? Was it when he was still a monk at Steyn or during his days as a student and tutor in Paris in the second half the 1490s? Did his encounter with John Colet during his first trip to England (1499-1500) point him in the direction not only of biblical study but also of an edition of Jerome? In 1499, first orally and then in an exchange of letters, which he reworked into the published treatise *Disputantiuncula de taedio, pavore, tristitia Iesu* (1503), he debated with Colet whether Christ feared his own death during his agony in the garden of Gethsemane. Erasmus argued in the affirmative, recognizing but also downplaying his disagreement with Jerome, one of Colet’s allies.⁹⁵ The sparse evidence allows for no conclusive answers about the initial inspiration to edit Jerome.

When, moreover, Erasmus first expresses his goal of editorial restoration in 1500 and 1501, he does not indicate where he encountered Jerome in textual corruption. Was he thinking of manuscript codices or printed editions or perhaps both? It would be reasonable to assume that he wanted to improve on the *incunabula*. For what other reason should a new edition of Jerome appear in print? It might be hard to believe that few literate people read Jerome, given the abundance of manuscript collections of his letters and printed editions. Would one more edition substantially increase Jerome’s readers? Was Erasmus unaware of the many editions printed before

⁹³ CWE 1: 308, ep. 141.

⁹⁴ Allen 1: 353, ep. 149. On Antoon van Bergen, see CEBR 1: 130-31.

⁹⁵ CWE 1: 210, ep. 109; 213, 215, ep. 110; CWE 70: 17, 19, 21, 56. On the debate, see James D. Tracy, “Humanists Among the Scholastics: Erasmus, More and Lefèvre d’Étaples on the Humanity of Christ,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 5 (1985): 30-42.

1501, or did he want to transform Jerome's oeuvre into a monument to the aims of humanist scholarship? Did he at the same time want to edit Jerome so as to make his mark in the scholarly world by turning Jerome's "ingenuity" into his own? Again, it is easier to pose these questions than answer them.

It was one thing to formulate his goal, quite another for Erasmus to achieve it. More than ten years after first writing to Batt about the projected edition, his correspondence finally reveals him at work. In 1511, Erasmus accepted an invitation from John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and Chancellor of Cambridge University, to teach Greek at Cambridge. According to a parenthetical remark in an entry of 1569 in the *Annals* of John Caius, Master of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, Erasmus also lectured on Jerome's letters and on his *Apology against Rufinus*.⁹⁶

Writing from Cambridge on 26 November, he excuses himself for not responding at length to a letter from his humanist friend, Andrea Ammonio:

If I reply to it rather briefly, you must put this down to St Jerome, whom I have undertaken to expound—a much harder assignment, by the muses I swear it, than one would think. Yet it is not the effort that torments me so much as the worry involved.⁹⁷

A week later, Erasmus tells the same friend of the torture to which Jerome subjects him.⁹⁸

Was Erasmus suffering primarily from the strain and worry of preparing lectures? This seems plausible, but did editorial labours accompany or even compound anxieties about teaching? On 19 May 1512, Josse Bade wrote to Erasmus from Paris. Bade had already printed Erasmus' edition of Lorenzo Valla's *Annotations on the New Testament* (1505), his translation of Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia* (1506), dialogues by Lucian translated by Erasmus and Thomas More (1506) and another edition of the *Adages* (1506-1507).⁹⁹ The printer was looking for more business. He noted that the printed

⁹⁶ John Caius, *The Annals of Gonville and Caius College*, ed. John Venn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), 125.

⁹⁷ CWE 2: 204, ep. 245.

⁹⁸ CWE 2: 209, ep. 248.

⁹⁹ Philippe Renouard, *Bibliographie des impressions et des oeuvres de Josse Badius Ascensius, imprimeur et humaniste, 1462-1535*, 3 vols. (Paris: Ém. Paul et Fils et Guillemin, 1908), 1: 72-73; 3: 344-45; 2: 428-29; 3: 26-27; 2: 416-17.

editions of Jerome's letters had all been sold and continued: "I know of no work that suits me better or, if I judge aright, does more credit to your profession than those letters." He offers "fifteen florins for the revision of the letters of St Jerome."¹⁰⁰ The offer demonstrates that knowledge of Erasmus' editorial ambition went beyond humanist colleagues and potential patrons to attract the commercial interest of a leading printer in Paris. Clearly, he was not simply lecturing on Jerome at Cambridge. Other letters written during his English sojourn reveal him at work as an editor. Jerome was only one of his projects. The New Testament, Seneca, and a new edition of the *Adages* competed for his time.¹⁰¹ Correcting the "blemishes" in Seneca and Jerome proved to be a bitter struggle, Erasmus complains from Cambridge to Ammonio on 26 November 1513.¹⁰²

Between 1514 and 1516, expectations of the publication of Jerome rose, fueled in large part by Erasmus. Jan Becker van Borssele wrote twice of his willingness to buy the edition of Jerome as well as other imminent publications.¹⁰³ The Louvain theologian, Maarten van Dorp proudly noted perhaps in September 1514:

I hear you have purged St Jerome's letters of the errors in which they abounded hitherto, killed off the spurious pieces with your critical dagger, and thrown light upon dark places. This was a task worthy of you, which will earn the gratitude of all theologians, especially those who hope for a marriage between Christian literature and elegance of style.¹⁰⁴

In August 1514, Erasmus arrived in Basel, where Johann Froben convinced him to entrust his editorial projects to his press. Froben had already printed a pirated edition of the *Adages* in 1513.¹⁰⁵ Authorized editions of the *Adages* and of Seneca followed in 1515. Already in the fall of 1514, Erasmus let the German humanists Jakob Wimpfeling and Ulrich Zasius know that he was preparing Jerome for publication. The letter to Wimpfeling, dated 21 September 1514, appeared in the second edition of Erasmus' *De duplici copia verborum*

¹⁰⁰ CWE 2: 232, 233, ep. 263.

¹⁰¹ CWE 2: 234, ep. 264; 242, ep. 269; 249, ep. 270.

¹⁰² CWE 2: 264, ep. 281.

¹⁰³ CWE 2: 286, ep. 291; CWE 3: 57, ep. 320.

¹⁰⁴ CWE 3: 20, ep. 304.

¹⁰⁵ S. Diane Shaw, "A Study of the Collaboration Between Erasmus of Rotterdam and His Partner Johann Froben at Basel During the Years 1514 to 1527," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Yearbook* 6 (1986): 47-48, 51.

ac rerum, printed in Strassburg by Matthias Schürer in December 1514. Accordingly, Erasmus announced publicly not only that the new edition of the *Adages* was being printed, but also that the New Testament and Jerome were on their way. The edition of Jerome's letters supplied the benefits of a corrected text, the clear distinction between genuine and spurious works, and Erasmus' commentary.¹⁰⁶ On 23 September, Erasmus informed Zasius: "Jerome, soon to be printed, is being furnished with our annotations and *scholia*."¹⁰⁷

Erasmus first came to Basel almost a year after the death of the city's eminent printer, Johann Amerbach, on Christmas Day 1513.¹⁰⁸ Froben was his junior partner.¹⁰⁹ Once Amerbach had printed editions of the works of Ambrose (1492) and Augustine (1506), he turned his attention to Jerome. An edition of this Father's complete works "was to have been the crowning achievement of Amerbach's life and career, the fulfillment of a plan formulated in his early years as an independent printer."¹¹⁰ The printer recruited the Franciscan Conrad Pellican and Johann Reuchlin, both outstanding Hebraists, and the Dominican Johannes Cono, an expert in Greek. Bruno, one of the printer's three sons, also joined the work on the edition, writing in 1510 to Michael Hummelberg that he had been working day and night on restoring Jerome to life.¹¹¹ Progress was uneven, complicated by Pellican's transfer away from Basel to the Franciscan house in Rufach, tensions between Reuchlin and Amerbach, Cono's death in 1513, and, most decisively, Amerbach's death. The completion of the edition was Amerbach's "spiritual legacy" to his sons, Bruno, Basil, and Boniface.¹¹² Erasmus rightly commented that "in the nick of time I found in Basel several people who were all set for this task

¹⁰⁶ CWE 3: 32, ep. 305.

¹⁰⁷ Allen 2: 26, ep. 307: *Apparatur mox excudendus Hieronymus cum annotamentis et scholiis nostris*. I have preferred my translation to that of CWE 3: 35, which confuses *annotamentis* with *argumentis*: "Jerome is being got ready for the press with my summaries and notes."

¹⁰⁸ Barabara C. Halporn, trans. and ed., *The Correspondence of Johann Amerbach: Early Printing in Its Social Context* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 362. Where not specified, the information in this paragraph comes from *ibid.*, 338-62.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 338.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 348.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 362.

and had in fact already started.” Among these were Froben and the Amerbach brothers.¹¹³

References to the printing of the edition appear often in the correspondence of 1515 and 1516.¹¹⁴ Pope Leo X (1513-1521), Jean Molinier, the Flemish humanist writing from Tournai, Andrea Ammonio, Thomas More, John Colet, and John Watson, a friend from Cambridge days, eagerly looked forward to the edition’s publication.¹¹⁵ Wimpfeling, disappointed not to hear anything from Erasmus, was waiting for news about the publication. Cardinal Raffaele Riario, who worked in the Roman curia, promised to obtain a copy of the edition as soon as possible. Nikolaus Ellenbog, a priest and the steward of the Benedictine abbey of Ottobeuren, wanted to know where he could buy “the works of the great Jerome” as well as how much they cost.¹¹⁶

In a letter of 18 October 1514 to Zasius, Erasmus first mentions what by the following year became a theme of his public promotion of the edition of Jerome. He explains why he did not answer Zasius’ last letter. The first reason was the third edition of the *Adages*. Second, “an even greater obstacle was St. Jerome, for it has cost me considerably more labour to correct and annotate his works (*scholiis explicare*) than it cost him to write them.”¹¹⁷ In separate letters to Willibald Pirckheimer and Zasius in 1515, Erasmus compares his work on the New Testament and Jerome with the labours of Hercules.¹¹⁸ In the preface to the edition of Seneca, printed by Froben in August 1515, he confirms that he took Seneca and Jerome “and with great efforts have rescued them from the corruptions, those most savage enemies of good literature, by which they had been hitherto not so much defiled as completely destroyed.”¹¹⁹ As with Adrian Brielis, Erasmus emphasized the hard work spent on editing Jerome as his particular contribution, for which he deserved credit and which presumably should attract interest and buyers.

¹¹³ CWE 3: 96-97, ep. 334.

¹¹⁴ CWE 3: 181, ep. 360; 184, ep. 362; 210, ep. 377; 225, ep. 385; 252, ep. 394; 273, ep. 402; 286, ep. 407; 298, ep. 416; 301, ep. 419.

¹¹⁵ CWE 3: 142, ep. 338; 193, ep. 371; 214, ep. 382; 236, ep. 388; 238-39, ep. 389; 311, ep. 423; 4: 36, ep. 450.

¹¹⁶ CWE 3: 145, ep. 340; 214, ep. 377; 252; ep. 394.

¹¹⁷ CWE 3: 47, ep. 313; Allen 2: 36, ep. 313.

¹¹⁸ CWE 3: 184, ep. 362; 187, ep. 366.

¹¹⁹ CWE 3: 64, ep. 325.

Erasmus expanded his treatment of the proverb ‘the labours of Hercules’ into an extensive essay in the 1515 edition of the *Adages* (III.i.1) to describe in greater detail the more than Herculean efforts invested in the edition of Jerome. He wrestled hard with the “monsters of errors” that had infested everything. He sweated over the restoration of Greek words that Jerome intersperses everywhere, words that in many recensions had been left out or added incorrectly. The addition of notes (*scholia*) and summaries (*argumenta*) kept him awake on many a night. He, “a little man,” and all alone, had to endure this formidable measure of editorial challenges, although he does recognize the learned Bruno Amerbach’s help with Hebrew words. While everyone reaps “the benefit and usefulness” of the editor’s labours, only he alone knows what difficulties he had to undergo. The reader, as he makes his way through Jerome’s writings without interruption, does not realize that sometimes “a single little word” held Erasmus in check for days. If the reader understands, he certainly does not remember how much trouble it cost Erasmus to produce a text that was easy to read and to spare others any inconvenience.¹²⁰

Erasmus also publicly advertised his labours and the other merits of the edition of Jerome in his first published collection of letters, printed by Froben in August 1515, the same month as the edition of Seneca. The four letters and a poem in praise of Schlettstadt, which had welcomed Erasmus on a visit in 1514, appeared at the end of a collection of texts on battles against the Turks and Muscovites, the *Iani Damiani...Elegeia*. The title page of this curious combination of scripts identified the first of the Erasmian letters as addressed to Leo X “on his praises and a new edition of the works of Jerome.” Missives to Domenico Grimani and Raffaele Riario, his cardinal-patrons in the Roman curia, and the epistolary apology for *The Praise of Folly* and for his New Testament intended for Dorp followed. The letters to Rome and Louvain were part of the programme of Froben and Erasmus to advertise the merits of the editions of Jerome and of the New Testament. The pre-publication promotion was of mutual benefit to the printer and the editor. The former increased the

¹²⁰ ASD II-5: 40-41.

renown of his press; the latter consolidated his pre-eminent position in European scholarship.¹²¹

The three letters to Rome had the combined effect of maintaining and extending patronage at the highest level of the Church. Erasmus reminds the cardinals of their mutual acquaintance, and, after prolonged and fulsome praise of Leo X as Europe's harbinger of peace, he asks the favour of dedicating the edition of Jerome to him so that "the best of all theologians is commended by the name of the best of all pontiffs."¹²² To Grimani and Riario he also expresses his intention to dedicate the edition to the pope but leaves in reserve Archbishop William Warham of Canterbury as a potential patron.¹²³ Erasmus in the end dedicated the edition to Warham. Lisa Jardine argues: "The expressed intention to dedicate the Jerome to Leo X, repeated in each of the letters, and culminating in the letter to Leo himself, *is*, therefore a dedication."¹²⁴ Yet we may wonder whether holding out the prospect of a dedication to Leo X was simply a strategy to win Rome's favour in advance and impress readers who might expect to see the new edition making its way to them under the papal banner.

Rome need not hesitate in bestowing its blessing, since Erasmus already could depend on the good will of his English supporters. These include, he tells Riario, Henry VIII and all the bishops, including those of Durham, Rochester, York, and above all Warham of Canterbury. Daunted by the more than Herculean effort that editing Jerome entailed, Erasmus took comfort, as Leo X learned, in the encouragement of scholars and the impatience of bishops, especially Warham, "that unique patron not merely of myself but of all sound learning and virtue anywhere in England." Erasmus gratefully acknowledges the pope's envoy in England and Bishop of Chieti, Gianpietro Carafa, "who revived my spirits by his comments and

¹²¹ Cornelis Augustijn, "Erasmus-Promotion anno 1515: die Erasmus-Stücke in *Iani Damiani...Elegia*," in Augustijn, *Erasmus: Der Humanist als Theologe und Kirchen-reformer* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 50-52. For another discussion of the promotional value of the published letters, see Hilmar M. Pabel, "Credit, Paratexts, and Editorial Strategies in Erasmus of Rotterdam's Editions of Jerome," in *Cognition and the Book: Typologies of Formal Organisation of Knowledge in the Printed Book of the Early Modern Period*, ed. Karl A. E. Enenkel and Wolfgang Neuber (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 223-26.

¹²² CWE 3: 109, ep. 335.

¹²³ CWE 3: 90, ep. 333; 97, ep. 334.

¹²⁴ Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 71; emphasis in the original.

his approval, and recalled me to the post of duty.”¹²⁵ Forty years later, Carafa became Pope Paul IV (1555-1559), and his Index of Prohibited Books (1559), the first Roman Index, censured all of Erasmus’ publications in greater detail than any other victim of papal proscription. All of them, in their various genres stood condemned, even if they contained absolutely nothing against religion or had nothing to do with religion.¹²⁶

Not surprisingly, the letters to Rome, issued in the public domain, also aimed at winning universal credit for Erasmus by emphasizing his dedicated hard work. With minor variations, he repeats the same story of struggle and accomplishment to his three correspondents. Erasmus presided over Jerome’s rebirth. Jerome, reborn in his edition, previously “was so much corrupted and mutilated that one might think he was now not so much revised as published for the first time (*primum aeditus*).”¹²⁷ This astounding claim, equating his edition with an *editio princeps* when Jerome’s letters had been in print for almost fifty years, was tantamount to a repudiation of all competition, to an assertion of a monopoly on Jerome. The strategy of promoting the edition as well as its reiteration in print until 1565 decisively secured a virtual Erasmian monopoly on the authoritative transmission of Jerome’s writings into the second half of the sixteenth century.

Jerome, by rights, belonged to Erasmus. He came back to life owing to the labours of his editor. Erasmus was fond of saying that he expended more effort in correcting and elucidating, and thus resurrecting, Jerome, than the Church Father had in composing his works in the first place. Most dramatically, he insists to Leo X: “I

¹²⁵ CWE 3: 86-87, ep. 333; 107, ep. 335.

¹²⁶ Bruce Mansfield, *Phoenix of His Age: Interpretations of Erasmus, c. 1550-1750* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 26. Erasmus never escaped Rome’s censure in the sixteenth century. In the Tridentine Index of 1564, he was in the confusing situation of being classified both as a heretic of the first class, which meant that all his works were proscribed, and a heretic of the second class, which meant that only specific publications were prohibited. At a meeting of Congregation of the Index in 1587, Robert Bellarmine argued that, although Erasmus had committed many serious errors, he did not seem to be a heretic and should appear only in the second class, and he recommended the expurgation of his works since none of them were so bad that they should be burned. Nevertheless in the Roman Indices of 1593 and 1596, Erasmus remained in both the first and second classes. See Hubert Wolf, *Index: Der Vatikan und die verbotene Bücher* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2006), 38-39.

¹²⁷ CWE 3: 89, ep. 333; Allen 2: 71, ep. 333.

have borne in this such a burden of toil that one could almost say I killed myself in my efforts to give Jerome a new lease on life. One thing I could even swear without hesitation: it cost Jerome less to write his works than it has cost me to restore and explain them.”¹²⁸

Hieronymus redivivus emerged, thanks to Erasmus, in his pristine purity and in clarity—with corrected texts, with the restoration of Greek and Hebrew words, with introductory summaries, with explanations of difficult words and passages, and with the relegation of *spuria* to a separate volume. The dedicatory letter to Warham rehearsed the familiar themes of editorial toil and elaborated on the methods of restoring a corrected text in greater detail than the pre-publication advertisements. With dramatic flare Erasmus proclaims: “like a modern Hercules I set out on my most laborious but most glorious campaign, taking the field almost unaided against all the monsters of error. I cannot think that Hercules consumed as much energy in taming a few monsters as I did in abolishing so many thousand blunders.”¹²⁹ Given his public advertisement of the hard work invested to overcome the many hardships involved in editing Jerome, it is hard to believe that Erasmus “did not undertake this labour to secure either reputation or reward.”¹³⁰ Towards the end of the dedication, he explicitly formulated his ownership of Jerome as a result of his more than Herculean labours. Jerome set the example by

repeatedly calling the Books of Kings his own work in his preface to them on the grounds that whatever we make our own in the process of correction, reading, and frequent meditation, this we duly claim for ourselves. By this rule, why should I myself also not claim my right to Jerome’s books, which, treated as refuse for so many centuries now, I, as if entering a void, with unimaginable toil have liberated (*asserui*) for students of true theology.¹³¹

In a catalogue of his publications first printed in 1523, Erasmus reserves the ninth volume of his *opera omnia* for Jerome’s letters, “on

¹²⁸ CWE 3: 108, ep. 335.

¹²⁹ CWE 3: 263, ep. 396.

¹³⁰ CWE 3: 262, ep. 396.

¹³¹ Allen 2: 220, ep. 396. Here I have preferred my own translation to that of CWE 3: 265: “In any case, in this line of business Jerome himself has laid down a principle for me in his preface to the books of Kings, repeatedly calling that work his, because anything that we have made our own by correcting, reading, constant devotion, we can fairly claim is ours. On this principle why should not I myself claim a proprietary right in the works of Jerome? For centuries they had been treated as

which I have expended so much labour that I can without impudence add this work to my own list.”¹³² Seven years later, in a new catalogue, all of Jerome (*totus Hieronymus*) along with Erasmus’ *scholia* in its second edition (1524-1526) heads the list of the projected *nonus ordo*. Erasmus expanded this category to include his editions of Cyprian, Hilary, Irenaeus, Ambrose, Lactantius, Augustine, and a treatise on the Eucharist by the twelfth-century monk Alger. His editions of Cicero’s *De officiis*, of Seneca, and of the New Testament, and his translations of Plutarch, Isocrates, Xenophon, John Chrysostom, Athanasius, Origen, and Basil enter his projected *opera omnia* in other categories.¹³³ In the preface to his edition of Irenaeus’ *Against Heresies* (1526), he asks: “why should I not call him ‘mine,’ since I found him almost buried and have done my best to clear away the dust of ages and restore him to the light?”¹³⁴ The work invested in publishing other authors, such as translation and textual restoration, obviously conferred proprietary rights.

Credit for restoring Jerome, however, did not belong to Erasmus alone, however much he emphasizes his own contribution. To Cardinal Riario Erasmus writes: “Greek and Hebrew words I have either restored or corrected.” Cardinal Grimani learned: “The Greek and Hebrew quoted, which were either lacking altogether or added in such a form that it would have been better to have added nothing, I have restored with the greatest care.”¹³⁵ Unqualified, these claims constitute an exaggeration. Erasmus’ Hebrew was far too rudimentary for the task at hand. On 1 March 1515, he assured Reuchlin that he had no intention of diminishing the credit that was his due, noting: “To Hebrew I make no claim, for I barely set my lips to it.”¹³⁶ Erasmus eventually admits to Grimani his dependence on the Amerbach brothers in matters of Hebrew, and he does the same in the dedication to Warham.¹³⁷ In the letter to Leo X, he draws up the most comprehensive list of collaborators. After praising Froben, the dedicated printer, he remembers the “distinguished scholars”

abandoned goods; I entered upon them as something ownerless, and by incalculable efforts reclaimed them for all devotees of the true theology.”

¹³² CWE 9: 356, ep. 1341A.

¹³³ Allen 8: 375-77, ep. 2283.

¹³⁴ CWE 12: 291, ep. 1738.

¹³⁵ CWE 3: 96, ep. 334.

¹³⁶ CWE 3: 63, ep. 324.

¹³⁷ CWE 3: 97, ep. 334; 263, ep. 396.

who contributed to the edition: Reuchlin, Cono, Beatus Rhenanus, and the Amerbach brothers.¹³⁸ He recognizes in his *argumentum* the efforts of the learned Cono, the renowned Reuchlin, and the Amerbach brothers to emend Jerome's letter to Sunnia and Fretela (ep. 106).¹³⁹ However much he asserts credit for himself, Erasmus in effect concedes what Jerome McGann contends for literary production: "Authority is a social nexus, not a personal possession."¹⁴⁰

Erasmus' advertising campaign was successful not least because potential readers seemingly absorbed the message. Colet obviously and happily accepted his claim to owning Jerome: "We await your Jerome. He is much in your debt, and so are we also, for we may now read him corrected and elucidated by you." In this letter of 20 June 1516, the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, on account of Erasmus' publications, prophesied: "The name of Erasmus will never perish, but you will deliver up your name to everlasting glory, and, labouring hard in Jesus, you will obtain for yourself that life eternal."¹⁴¹ Like Erasmus, who celebrated his scholarly credentials as he strove to advance theological studies by restoring to Latin Christendom its greatest theologian, Colet believed that secular reputation and sacred purpose were compatible. So did John Watson, who wrote from Cambridge in August 1516. Erasmus was unanimously acclaimed "the most learned of all scholars" and "the greatest expert in both languages" (Latin and Greek), and his fame was spreading throughout Christendom. After acknowledging how wonderfully he shed light upon Christ in his edition of the New Testament, Watson wishes for God to grant Erasmus a hundredfold reward along with eternal life. He promises: "We shall greet Jerome with open arms and with all good wishes, giving thanks to his devotee and restorer."¹⁴² Erasmus was no doubt most pleased by the reaction of another Englishman, William Warham, who wrote to him on 22 June. Owing to the New Testament and the edition of Jerome, Erasmus will achieve "immortal fame" on earth, in heaven "divine reward," and from Warham "whatever I shall be able rightly and suitably to offer." For

¹³⁸ CWE 3: 108-109, ep. 335.

¹³⁹ *Opera* (1516), 4: 34v.

¹⁴⁰ Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 48.

¹⁴¹ Allen 2: 257, 258, ep. 423.

¹⁴² Allen 2: 315-16, ep. 450.

receiving “the volumes of Jerome, never sufficiently to be praised,” and the New Testament, the archbishop expresses his “undying gratitude, that is for the toils that you suffered in these works.”¹⁴³ Besides coming from England and lavishing the same sort of praise on Erasmus, these letters had one more thing in common. Erasmus included them in published collections of his letters: the letter to Watson in the *Epistolae elegantes* (1517), and those to Colet and Warham in the *Epistolae aliquot ad Erasmum* (1516), *Epistolae sane quam elegantes* (1518), and *Epistolae ad diversos* (1521). Erasmus let the reading public know how precisely his English correspondents concurred with him, thus employing their praise as another vehicle for self-promotion.

Consenting voices came from the continent too, and many of them joined the chorus of Erasmus’ well-wishers inscribed on the printed page. In one of the earliest catalogues of Erasmus’ publications, written in November 1516, Adriaan Cornelissen van Baerland, a member of the humanist fellowship in Louvain, informs his brother Cornelis that Erasmus “restored Jerome, elucidated with summaries and *scholia*, to us in such a way that he could seem a different person from the one we commonly read before.” From Paris, also in November 1516, the *parlementaire* François Deloynes repeats familiar Erasmian refrains. The edition of Jerome, which he holds in his hands, is “a strenuous labour, to be sure, and not to be undertaken except with the strength of a particular Hercules, namely Erasmus.” He tells Erasmus that owing to “your solicitude, diligence, and supreme labour,” Jerome has come back to life, purified of all corruptions and “restored in pristine and true splendour in a sort of new garment of immortality supplied by you.”¹⁴⁴ Erasmus first published these letters in the *Epistolae elegantes* (1517). A letter of 13 September 1517 from the youthful and influential prelate Albert of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mainz, found its way into the first edition of Erasmus’ *Ratio verae theologiae* (1518). Albert, too, faithfully echoed Erasmus: “What was more lamentable than our current texts of the great Jerome, so changed from his true self, so sadly mutilated and cut to pieces? Now, thanks to you, he has returned to the light of day and is as it were raised from the dead.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Allen 2: 262, ep. 425.

¹⁴⁴ Allen 2: 389, ep. 492; 406, ep. 494.

¹⁴⁵ CWE 5: 118-19, ep. 661. On the printing of this letter, see CWE 5: 248.

Erasmus did not publish a letter of 11 December 1516 from George Spalatin, secretary of the Elector of Saxony, who passed on advice from an unnamed Augustinian to read Augustine's anti-Pelagian works in order to come to a more authentic understanding of the doctrine of justification. In the following year, Erasmus learned of Martin Luther by name. In the meantime, he must have appreciated the news that Elector Frederick admired "the works of St Jerome so well restored in your edition that before you corrected them anyone might have supposed we possessed any other author's works rather than Jerome's."¹⁴⁶

Erasmus did all he could to orchestrate the success of the edition of Jerome, and he keenly followed its progress once printed in 1516. From Brussels he reports in October that the edition was on sale in Antwerp and in November that "the volumes of Jerome are already sold out here." Still in Brussels, he urges his friend Pieter Gillis, city clerk of Antwerp, to see to the binding of the volumes. In letters of 1517 to Bruno Amerbach from Louvain, he rejoices that "Jerome finds a warm welcome everywhere," and that "the edition of Jerome is approved even by the theologians."¹⁴⁷

Independent evidence, while fragmentary, confirms the rapid dissemination of the edition. On 24 August 1516, Luther asked Spalatin to lend him the letters of Jerome or transcribe a passage on St. Bartholomew (whose feast fell on that day) from the *De viris illustribus*. That this was not Erasmus' edition is clear from the postscript of his letter. He assures Spalatin that "I do not wish to be a theologian and be completely devoid of Jerome. For I am waiting for the edition of Erasmus."¹⁴⁸ Luther eventually went through that edition carefully, underlining passages and adding in the margins vertical strokes of the pen and verbal comments. At times, he seems to side with Erasmus when he observes how a passage from Jerome is at odds with the ceremonialism "of our time," yet in another place he observes that Erasmus has no grasp of "the peculiarity of grace" and favours Pelagius more than he favours Jerome.¹⁴⁹ Volumes 1 and 2 and 5

¹⁴⁶ CWE 4: 167, ep. 501.

¹⁴⁷ CWE 4: 94, ep. 475; 120, ep. 483; 131, ep. 491; CWE 5: 80-81, ep. 632; 231, ep. 732a.

¹⁴⁸ Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Briefwechsel*, 15 vols. (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1930-1978), 1: 50, ep. 19.

¹⁴⁹ Martin Luther, *Annotierungen zu den Werken des Hieronymus*, ed. Martin Brecht and Christian Peters (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2000), 67, 70.

through 9 of the 1516 edition that Luther studied originally belonged to Aesticampianus, who died in Wittenberg in 1520.¹⁵⁰ In the autumn of 1516, another German humanist, Conradus Mutianus, drew Johann Lang's attention to the fact that Erasmus had elucidated Jerome's works with "brilliant annotations" and in December wanted to borrow the edition from Lang.¹⁵¹

By November 1516, Deloynes had the edition in his hands in Paris.¹⁵² Juan Luis Vives reported four years later after returning to Bruges from Paris of the esteem prevalent in the French capital for Erasmus' editions of Jerome and of the New Testament. His is "a labour which has done more for Christian piety than a thousand years of declamation in the lecture-room."¹⁵³ In 1517, Ambrosius Blarer, a Benedictine monk and future Protestant Reformer in Constance and later in the Duchy of Württemberg, bought the entire edition. So did, no later than 1518, Anton Engelbrecht, who had come to Basel the previous year to study theology. After four years as Suffragan Bishop of Speyer (1520-1524), Engelbrecht became a Protestant preacher in Strassburg, but returned to the Catholic Church in the 1540s. Their marginal annotations in the edition of Jerome reveal that Blarer and Engelbrecht agreed with Erasmus' humanist approach to theology and with his critique of contemporary piety.¹⁵⁴ Konrad Peutinger, the city clerk in Augsburg with close ties to the imperial court of Charles V, professed to Erasmus in 1521 that, as he reads Jerome, "restored by your exquisite scholarship," as well as "your other very learned words, ... I seem to see and hear you teaching me."¹⁵⁵ John Fewterer, formerly a fellow of Pembroke Hall at Cambridge, gave the 1516 edition to the library of Syon Abbey, England's only Brigittine monastery, which Henry V had founded in 1415. Syon most likely acquired the edition after Fewterer

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 4.

¹⁵¹ Luther, *Briefwechsel*, 1: 51, n. 5.

¹⁵² CWE 4: 155, ep. 494.

¹⁵³ CWE 7: 298, ep. 1108.

¹⁵⁴ Hans-Peter Hasse, "Ambrosius Blarer liest Hieronymus: Blarers handschriftliche Eintragungen in seinem Exemplar der Hieronymusausgabe des Erasmus von Rotterdam (Basel 1516)," in *Auctoritas Patrum: zur Rezeption der Kirchenväter im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Leif Grane, Alfred Schindler, Markus Wriedt (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1993), 36-51; C. H. W. van den Berg, "Die Glossen von Anton Engelbrecht in der Hieronymusausgabe des Erasmus und ihre Bedeutung," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 67 (1987): 15-48. On Blarer see CEBR 1: 151-52.

¹⁵⁵ CWE 8: 329, ep. 1247. On Peutinger, see CEBR 3: 74-76.

became a monk there around 1517.¹⁵⁶ In 1529, Frans Titelmans, a Franciscan theologian teaching at the friary in Louvain, reported that a Friar Matthias, whom Erasmus thought of as an adversary—mistakenly, according to Titelmans—made sure that the Franciscan “public library” in Antwerp had copies of many of Erasmus’ theological publications, including “all the volumes of Jerome corrected by you (*ex tua recognitione*), the edition of the New Testament along with the *Annotations* and the *Paraphrases*.”¹⁵⁷

The sixteenth-century bibliographical record, spanning almost five decades, shows the longevity and influence of Erasmus’ Jerome. In the list that follows, I have modernized the Latin spelling. Where title pages are prolix, I have provided an abbreviated title, usually the principal title. In some cases, the words in the first few lines of a title originally appeared all in majuscules on a title page. I have decided not to render these words in the same way, except for the name of Erasmus, which usually stood out since the words before and after it were not capitalized.

1. *Omnium operum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis tomus primus [-nonus]* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516). The first edition had no uniform title. Each volume has its own title. In 1520, Johannes Oecolampadius published an index for the first edition. His *Index in tomos omnes operum Divi Hieronymi* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1520) consisted of alphabetical indices to Jerome’s works, to Erasmus’ *scholia* with Latin and Greek entries, and to the Hebrew words used by Jerome.

2. *S. Hieronymi lucubrationes omnes una cum pseudepigraphis, & alienis admixtis in novem digestae tomos, sed multo quam ante vigilantius per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM emendatae locis non paucis feliciter correctis, quibusdam etiam locupletatis, duntaxat in scholiis* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1524-1526). The title page of the second authorized edition mentions only Erasmus as the editor of all of Jerome’s works and indicates the improvements of the edition. Thanks to Erasmus, Jerome’s works have been corrected in many places with greater care than previously, and especially the *scholia* have been enriched. Jerome’s genuine letters, appearing in the first three volumes, have their own title page, which also proclaims Erasmus’ revisions, corrections, and enrichments: *Opus epistolarum Divi*

¹⁵⁶ Vincent Gillespie and A. I. Doyle, eds., *Syon Abbey with The Libraries of the Carthusians*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, vol. 9 (London: The British Library, 2001), liv, 157-159. On Fewterer, see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 19: 456-57, s. v. “Fewterer, John,” by J. T. Rhodes.

¹⁵⁷ Allen 8: 311, ep. 2245. On Titelmans, see CEBR 3: 326-27.

Hieronimi Stridonensis, una cum scholiis DES. ERASMI ROTERODAMI, denuo per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum. A separate title for the genuine letters must have facilitated separate editions of the letters. See nos. 3, 4, 7, 9, 10. In 1524, Erasmus sent a copy of the genuine letters to William Warham.¹⁵⁸ The fourth volume, which contains the *spuria*, was printed in 1525, the remaining volumes in 1526.

3. *Epistolae Divi Hieronimi: Opus epistolarum Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, optimo cuique Christianae religionis cultori perutile, una cum scholiis disertissimi viri Des. Erasmi Roterodami denuo per illum recognitum hacque ultima editione diligenter castigatum* (Lyon: Jacques Marechal, 1525). This is the first (unauthorized) issue of simply the three volumes of genuine letters gathered into one book.

4. *Opus epistolarum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, una cum scholiis Des. Erasmi Roterodami. Denuo per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum* (Lyon: Jean Crespin, 1528). The colophon lists Ioannes Crespinus as the printer, but throughout the edition the device of Guillaume Boullé is highly prominent. In another issue (4a), Boullé's device has vanished, and the credit for production goes solely to Crespin.¹⁵⁹

5. *S. Hieronymi lucubrationes omnes una cum pseudepigraphis, & alienis admixtis, in nouem digestae tomos, sed multo quam ante vigilantius per DES. ERASMUVM ROTERODAMUM emendatae, locis non paucis feliciter correctis, quibusdam etiam locupletatis* (Lyon: Sebastian Gryphius, 1530). Erasmus' Jerome must have been extremely marketable in Lyon. This third Lonnais printing in five years goes beyond the genuine letters to present for purchase an unauthorized reissue of the second edition of Jerome's complete works.

6. *Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, opera omnia quae extant, una cum pseudepigraphis & alienis, in nouem tomos digesta: ac nunc recens magna fide & diligentia cum vetustis Victorianae bibliothecae ad muros Parisienses exemplaribus collata, & restituta* (Paris: Claude Chevallon, 1533-1534). Erasmus' Jerome remained popular with printers in France into the 1530s, but in this authorized third edition, the editor's name no longer figures in the main title. The new selling point of this edition, according to the title, is that Jerome's works "now recently with great reliability and care" have been restored through a collation with ancient manuscripts

¹⁵⁸ Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters*, 166.

¹⁵⁹ BNF, C. 1661 (no. 4); Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Toronto, BR 65 J45 E6 1528 v. 1-3 (no. 4a). On Boullé and the books he sold and published, see Henri-Louis Baudrier, *Bibliographie Lyonnaise: Recherches sur les imprimeurs, libraires, relieurs et fondeurs de lettres de Lyon au XVI^e siècle*, 12 vols. (1895-1921; repr., Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1999), 4: 17-35, 406-406. On the edition of Jerome, see *ibid.*, 4: 22-23.

from the library of the Abbey of St. Victor in Paris. Erasmus' name slips into the second line of the notice beneath the main title. Here he is given credit for the *scholia*.

7. *Opus epistolarum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis una cum scholiis DES. ERASMI ROTERO. denuo per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum* (Lyon: Jacques Giunta, 1535). This was the third and last printing of the collection of Jerome's letters, as edited by Erasmus, to appear in Lyon.

8. *Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes una cum pseudepigraphis, & alienis admixtis, in novem digestae tomos, sed multo quam ante vigilantius per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM nunc postremum emendatae, locis non paucis feliciter correctis, quibusdam etiam locupletatis, duntaxat in scholiis* (Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopus, 1536-1537). This is the fourth and final authorized edition. Corrected for the last time (*postremum*), Erasmus' Jerome returned home, as it were, to Basel. Erasmus, who died in the early hours of 12 July 1536, did not live to see in print his final revisions to the edition he had launched twenty years previously.

9. *Opus epistolarum Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, una cum scholiis DES. ERASMI ROTERODAMI, nunc postremum per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum* (Basel: Froben, 1536-1537). I infer that this collection of Jerome's letters was issued separately from his collected works (see above, no. 8), which also appeared in Basel in 1536-1537. Indices at the beginning of the first volume of the *opera omnia* editions provided a prospectus of the works, arranged in different ways, contained in all nine volumes. The index in this collection of letters lists only texts from the first three volumes, which as of 1524-1526 contained the genuine letters.¹⁶⁰

10. [*Opus epistolarum Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, una cum scholiis DES. ERASMI ROTERODAMI, nunc postremum per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum*] (Basel: Froben, 1543). The title page of this relatively unknown edition seems to be missing from the copy that I consulted (BAV, R.G. Teol. II. 349). Consequently, the year of publication is missing from the first of the three volumes. The title page of the second volume gives the year 1543, the third 1542 (M D XLII), but the colophon of the index attached to the third volume reads 1543 (M D XLIII). Perhaps the year of publication on the title page of the third volume represents a typographical error. Again, as with no. 9

¹⁶⁰ I consulted the copies at the BAV, Mai XIA.X. 30-32, and the LMU, 2° P. eccl. 320.

above, I believe that this edition is simply a collection of the genuine letters.¹⁶¹

11. *Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, opera omnia quae extant, una cum pseudepigraphis et alienis admixtis in novem tomos digesta per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM nunc postremum emendata, locis non paucis foeliciter emendatis, et locupletatis duntaxat in scholiis* (Paris: Charlotte Guillard, 1546). The printer, the widow of Claude Chevallon, who had printed the third authorized edition of Erasmus' Jerome (no. 6), took over the printing business after her husband's death in 1537.¹⁶² Guillard restored Erasmus' name in majuscules in the main title of her reissue of the fourth edition (no. 8).

12. *Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes, additis una pseudepigraphis et alienis, scriptis ipsius admixtis, in novem tomos, per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM digestae, ac tanta vigilantia postremum emendatae, ut eruditus lector vix quicquam ultra queat desiderare* (Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopius, 1553). The title reinforces the completeness of the corrections by asserting that a learned reader could scarcely want anything more.

13. *Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes, additis una pseudepigraphis et alienis, scriptis ipsius admixtis, in novem tomos, per Des. Erasmus Roterodamum digestae, ac tanta vigilantia postremum emendatae, ut eruditus lector vix quicquam ultra queat desiderare* (Basel: Nicolaus and Eusebius Episcopius, 1565). The Episcopius brothers printed the last sixteenth-century edition of Erasmus' Jerome. Erasmus' name appears in majuscules, but so do all the words that precede it.

To recapitulate, the *opera omnia* editions (nos. 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13) consisted of nine volumes. In 1516, the genuine letters and treatises appeared in volumes 1, 3, and 4; the *spuria* in volume 2. Interrupting the genuine letters must have seemed awkward, for after 1516 the *spuria* were relegated to volume 4. Consequently, all abbreviated editions limited themselves to the first three volumes of genuine letters, excluding the *spuria*. Erasmus took responsibility for the first four volumes; the Amerbach brothers, principally Bruno, edited the last five.

Volumes 5 to 9 consisted of scriptural commentaries, but not all of these were by Jerome. His commentaries on the four major proph-

¹⁶¹ In Pabel, "Credit, Paratexts, and Editorial Strategies," 236, following the catalogue of the BAV, I incorrectly gave 1545 as the year of publication for this edition.

¹⁶² Beatrice Beech, "Charlotte Guillard: A Sixteenth-Century Business Woman," *Renaissance Quarterly* 36 (1983): 347.

ets and twelve minor prophets filled volumes 5 and 6, respectively. In the prefatory letter to volume 7, Bruno Amerbach maintained that the commentaries on Proverbs and Job were not by Jerome and, the editor was prepared to say, neither was the translation of Origen's four homilies on the Song of Songs. The commentary on Ecclesiastes was Jerome's, however.¹⁶³ Although the running headers of volume 8 indicated that Jerome was the author of the commentaries on the Psalms that appeared on its pages, the title page does not mention the Church Father, and Bruno Amerbach in his preface denied their authenticity.¹⁶⁴ An appendix to this volume contained a polyglot psalter—in Greek, in the Vulgate translation by “an unknown author,” in Hebrew, and in Jerome's Latin translation according to the *Hebraica veritas*. The New Testament commentaries as well as Jerome's translation of Didymus' treatise on the Holy Spirit occupied volume 9. As for the commentaries, the editors sifted out the work of Jerome—Matthew, Mark, Galatians, Ephesians, Titus, Philemon—from the “unknown author” who commented on all the Pauline epistles. In the 1516 edition, a blank folio separates the end of Jerome's Pauline commentaries from the beginning of those by Anonymous.¹⁶⁵ The title page does not refer to the inclusion of the Gospels according to Luke and John. These biblical texts appear in the Vulgate translation, not in that of Erasmus.

The title pages of the thirteen publications listed above assert the credit due to Erasmus, and for the most part, they display his name prominently. As Barbara Halporn has observed, Erasmus' name is as typographically prominent as that of Jerome on the title page of the first volume of the 1516 edition (figure 3). Both names appear in capital letters in the same font size. In the first edition, “everywhere the name of Erasmus dominates,”¹⁶⁶ and this is true of subsequent editions.

The amount of editorial commentary distinguished the first four from the last five volumes. The latter group contained nothing from the editors beyond prefatory letters. Bruno and Basil Amerbach signed the letter in volume 5. In the subsequent volumes, Bruno was the sole author of the prefaces. The Amerbachs placed a notice to

¹⁶³ *Opera* (1516), 7: 1v.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 8: 1v.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 9: [130].

¹⁶⁶ Halporn, *The Correspondence of Johann Amerbach*, 363, 364 (quotation).

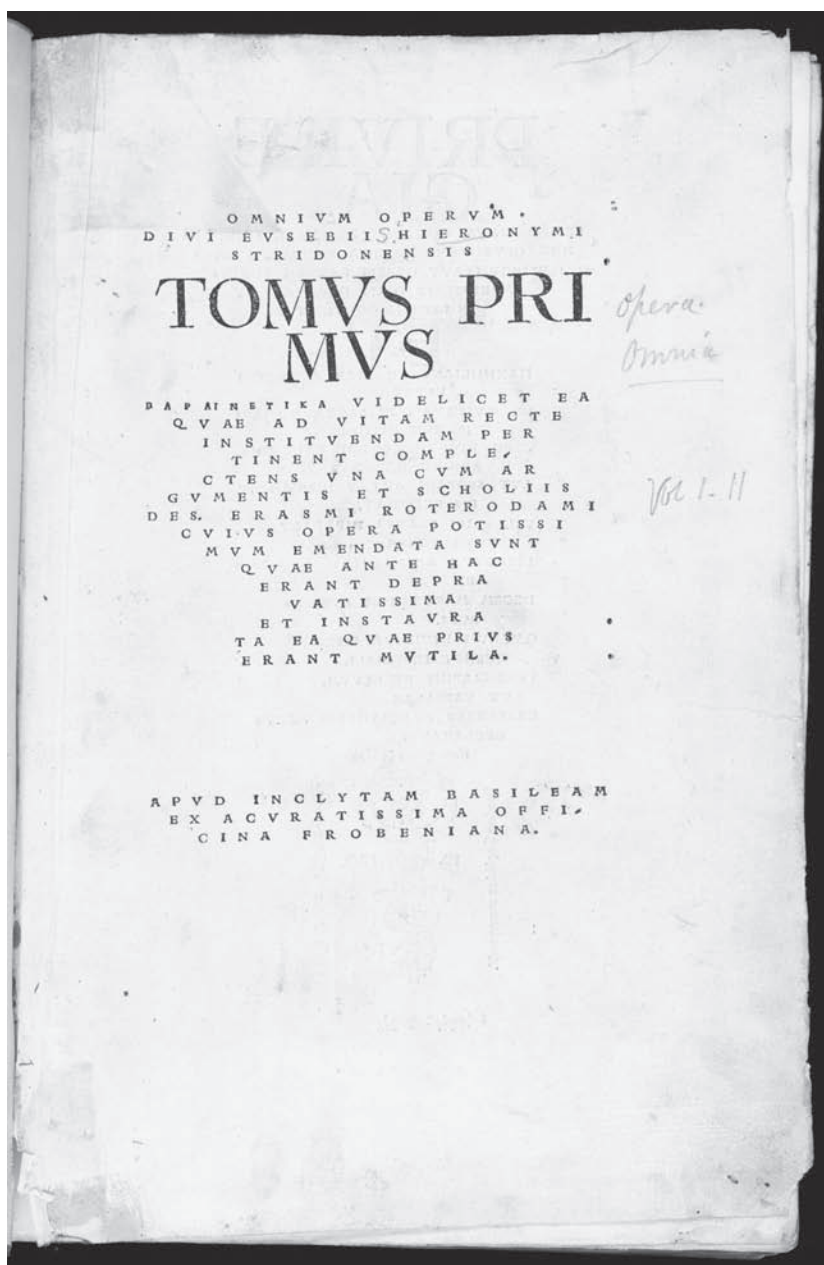


Fig. 3. Title page, *Omnium operum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516). Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

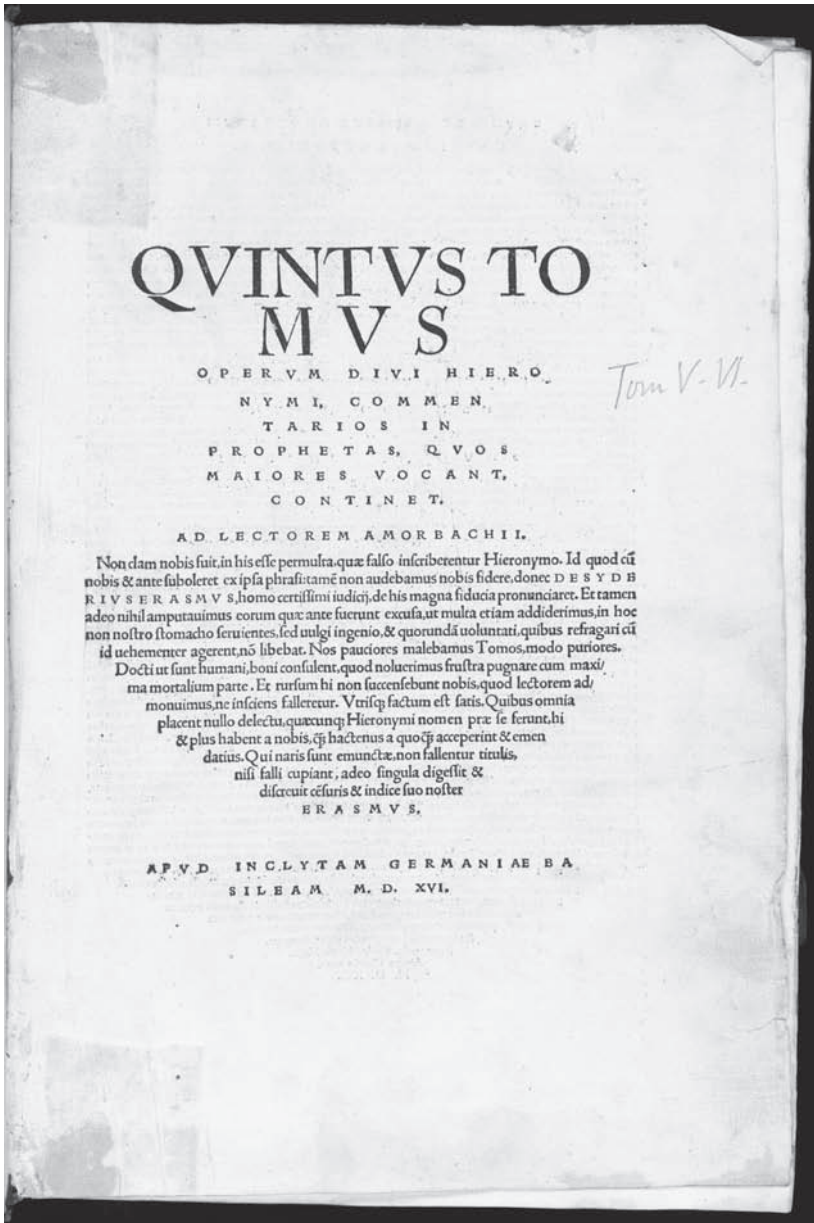


Fig. 4. Title page, *Quintus tomus operum Divi Hieronymi* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516). Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

the reader on the title page of the fifth volume (figure 4) that did not recur in any other edition of the *opera omnia*. The notice seemed to pertain to all volumes under their care. It was obvious that among their contents many things were falsely attributed to Jerome, but the fraternal editors did not dare trust themselves until DESYDERIUS ERASMUS, “a man of the most proven judgment should announce his decision on these matters with great reliability.” In order to serve common taste, but not their own, they decided not to remove anything and even added many texts, unwilling to thwart the wishes of those who insisted on this policy. They preferred to have fewer volumes, but ones that were purer. Scholars should take into consideration that the editors did not want to enter into conflict with most of humanity; they should also not take offence at warnings to the reader to keep him from making unwitting errors. The editors have done enough for the fastidious and for the erudite. Those who delight in having Jerome’s name accompany every text without qualification “have even more from us than they have up to now received from anyone else, and it is more correct.” Those with keener powers of perception will not be deceived by inscriptions unless they want to be deceived. The notice ends, as it began, with a prominent typographical reference to Erasmus, pointing out that each and every work has been classified and assessed with judgments (*censurae*) and in the table of contents by “our ERASMUS.”

References to Erasmus appear in the other prefaces. On the verso of the title page, Bruno and Basil state in the preface to the fifth volume that “our ERASMUS” has discussed false attributions to Jerome “in the previous volumes.” They mention other contributors to the edition: their father, Gregor Reisch, superior of the Rhenish province of Carthusians and advisor to Emperor Maximilian I,¹⁶⁷ Cono, and Reuchlin, but “the great ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM (*ERASMVS ille ROTERODAMVS*)” made the most important contribution of all. He could have managed everything on his own. Besides being endowed with a “varied and by no means common erudition,” he was a man of “a tireless and absolutely invincible attentiveness, a most precise judgment, and a type of amazing ingenuity in making textual conjectures when circumstances demand it.” Acknowledging at the end of the preface to the seventh volume that “a most ancient

¹⁶⁷ CEBR 3: 137.

codex from the library of St. Gallen” attributes authorship of the commentaries on Job to Jerome, Bruno allows himself to say of the commentaries what “our Erasmus” somewhere wrote about the Pandects of Justinian, namely that they are “patchworks and uneven assortments of glosses.” At the outset of the next volume, he notes that the psalm commentaries, although not entirely devoid of learning, have been wrongly ascribed to Jerome. Bruno does not care to prove this, for “our ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM did this in an assessment (*censura*) on the writings of Jerome which we have placed in the front matter of the edition (*in operis frontispicio*).” Erasmus’ reasoning, at least in this preface, yields to his credentials in making judgments. He is a man “who, just as he deserves to be compared with those ancient heroes of literature, so also in adjudicating the writings of authors—and I say this without disrespect—he ranks first among those whom our age has to offer.” In the appendix to the eighth volume, Bruno looks forward to the shedding of more light on the ancient and excellent theology that will come “from this most accurate edition of Jerome’s works (*ex hac castigatissima Hieronymianorum operum aeditione*), for which students owe a debt of gratitude especially to ERASMUS and also somewhat to us.”¹⁶⁸

The references to him in these prefaces extend the mantle of Erasmus’ authority over the entire edition. Beginning with the second edition of the *opera omnia*, the cumulative title accredited only Erasmus as editor and neglected the Amerbach brothers. Yet when the volumes not under his immediate supervision elicited criticism, he distanced himself from any responsibility for them. Responding in 1521 to an attack from the Spanish theologian and biblical scholar Diego López Zúñiga (Stunica), he complains that “if anything offends him in the books of Jerome edited by the Amerbachs, he prefers to foist it upon me instead of upon those who acknowledge themselves to be the authors of the edition.”¹⁶⁹

Erasmus’ editorial interventions are legion in the first four volumes. After turning the title page of the first volume of the 1516 edition, readers immediately encounter his dedicatory letter to William Warham. Erasmus’ life of Jerome follows. What Bruno Amerbach calls the *frontispicium* ends with three tables of contents that

¹⁶⁸ *Opera* (1516), 5: 1v, 7: 1v, 8: 1v, 8 (appendix): A1v.

¹⁶⁹ ASD IX-2: 66.

allow the reader to navigate the entire edition according to the authenticity of the works, their placement in each volume, and their *incipits*. Erasmus attaches three types of comments to Jerome's texts: an *argumentum* that introduces and summarizes a text, *scholia* that elucidate a particular word or passage, and concluding observations called *antidoti*, which, in particular, "contain characteristically Erasmian remarks on the ways and practices of Christians in his own time that underline the contrast with the example or ideal in the early Church."¹⁷⁰ The editorial apparatus of only some letters and treatises included one or more *antidoti*. For the volume that contained the *spuria* Erasmus composed *censurae* or judgments whose general function it was to expose the inauthenticity of texts ascribed to Jerome. No *argumenta* or *scholia* appeared in this volume. Erasmus did insert, however, two lengthy letters to novice theologians, "to all students of Scripture." The relatively brief notices to the reader that appeared at the beginning of the second, third, and fourth volumes in the 1516 edition turned into longer prefaces addressed to Warham in the second and all subsequent editions.

The references to Erasmus that recur most frequently beyond the title pages assert his theological credentials. Although academic theology as taught in Europe's universities never won his enduring admiration, he nonetheless obtained in short order a doctorate in theology from the University of Turin in 1506. The degree's main purpose was to enhance his scholarly stature, for he "believed that readers would pay more attention to his message if he were a doctor of theology."¹⁷¹ Already at the end of 1506, Erasmus enjoyed the prestige of his degree. In the volume of translations of Lucian printed by Josse Bade, he inserted a poem to "the most learned of physicians," his friend Guillaume Cop, "on the furtive onset of old age and on the necessity of devoting the rest of one's life to Christ, to whom all is owed." Erasmus publicly identified himself as a "professor of sacred theology" in the title. A notice from Bade to the reader at the end of the poem refers to Erasmus as a "highly educated man

¹⁷⁰ John Olin, "Erasmus and Saint Jerome: The Close Bond and Its Significance," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 7 (1987): 47.

¹⁷¹ Paul Grendler, "How to Get a Degree in Fifteen Days: Erasmus' Doctorate of Theology from the University of Turin," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 18 (1998): 42.

recently adorned with the laurel crown of sacred theology.”¹⁷² Erasmus styled himself a theologian in 1514 in the letter to Wimpfeling printed in the second edition of the *De copia*. In dedicating the New Testament to Leo X, Erasmus described himself as “the least of theologians,” but this humble tone recedes from the title of the Gospels in the *Novum instrumentum* (1516): “The four Gospels diligently revised in fidelity to the most ancient Latin manuscripts and in accordance with the Greek original (*ad Graecam veritatem*) by Erasmus of Rotterdam, professor of sacred theology.”¹⁷³

Erasmus introduces himself to Warham and through Warham to all his readers as “professor of sacred theology” in the dedicatory letter of the edition of Jerome.¹⁷⁴ The title that inaugurates Jerome’s texts reads: “The letters or epistolary books of St. Eusebius Jerome of Strido, most diligently revised through a collation of the most ancient manuscripts by Erasmus of Rotterdam, professor of sacred theology, and elucidated by the summaries (*argumenta*) and *scholia* of the same [Erasmus].” Here, as in the *Novum instrumentum*, editorial and theological credentials combine. The titles of the *argumenta* for the first texts in the volumes of the genuine Jerome reassert the editor’s authority as “professor of sacred theology.” Similarly, the title of the *scholia* on Jerome’s *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* reminds readers of Erasmus the theologian. Jean Crespin transferred Erasmus’ academic distinction to the title pages of the second and third volumes of Jerome’s letters in the issue that omits references to Guillaume Boullé (no. 4a), identifying Erasmus, “professor of sacred theology,” as author of the *argumenta* and *scholia*.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² *Luciani viri quam disertissimi compluria opuscula longe festivissima ab Erasmo Roterodamo & Thoma moro interpretibus optimis in latinorum linguam traducta* (Paris: Josse Bade, 1506), LlIr, LIIIV. On Cop, see CEBR 1: 336-37. For the poem, see CWE 85: 12-25 with notes at CWE 86: 412-39.

¹⁷³ Allen 2: 17, ep. 305; 2: 84, ep. 384; *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516), 1: 1. The first edition of Erasmus’ New Testament appears in facsimile reproduction in Erasmus of Rotterdam, *Novum Instrumentum: Basel 1516*, intro. Heinz Holeczek (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann-holzboog, 1986).

¹⁷⁴ *Opera* (1516), 1: α2r.

¹⁷⁵ *Opera* (1516), 1: 1r, 2v; 3: 1r; 4: 1r, 104r; *S. Hieronymi lucubrationes omnes* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1524-1526), 1: 1; 2: 5; 3: 5, 232; *Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, opera omnia quae extant* (Paris: Claude Chevallon, 1533-1534), 1: 1r; 2: 3 r; 3: 2r, 79v; *Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes* (Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopus, 1536-1537), 1: 1; 2: 5; 3: 5, 228; *Opus epistolarum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Lyon: Jean Crespin, 1528), 2: title page, 3: title page.

The humanist theologian could never have achieved his fame and asserted his authority without the collaboration of printers. His name might have perished if printers did not constantly invoke it typographically. Erasmus' name was good for business. But printers deserved credit in their own right too. In the 1516 edition, Froben advertises his "most accurate printing house" on the title page of the first volume and in the colophon of the fourth volume. Embarrassingly enough, the adjective on the title page is misspelled *acuratissima*. Besides himself, Froben accredits the investment of the three Amerbach brothers, their father, and Jacob Rechburger their brother-in-law in the colophon of the ninth volume.¹⁷⁶ His device, two serpents coiled around a staff upon which a dove perches, appeared at the bottom of the verso of the title page of the first volume. It appeared more prominently and more frequently in the *opera omnia* of 1524-1526, 1536-1537, and 1553. Even the Episcopius brothers retained the hallmark of the Froben firm in several places in the 1565 edition, or at least they forgot to remove it.

When Johann Froben died in 1527, Claude Chevallon hoped to make his printing establishment a major disseminator of Erasmus' publications.¹⁷⁷ The Parisian printer's device replaced that of Froben on the nine volumes of the 1533-1534 edition. Chevallon reprinted Erasmus' prefatory note of 15 July 1524 to Warham, first inserted on the verso of the new cumulative title page of Jerome's letters of the second authorized edition. The note includes a brief tribute to the skills of Froben, whose name appears in majuscules. Erasmus valued Froben's typographical expertise. Chevallon preserved the majuscules.

Erasmus openly admitted that all too often he rushed into print, handing to printers copy on which the ink had not yet dried, although this was a common enough occurrence in editing books judging by information about printing in Italy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. He should have heeded the advice of Horace to keep a book under wraps for nine years if he wanted it to outlive him and everyone to read it.¹⁷⁸ Nevertheless, his books were best

¹⁷⁶ *Opera* (1516), 9: 203v.

¹⁷⁷ P. S. Allen, "Erasmus' Relations with his Printers," in Allen, *Erasmus: Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), 131-32.

¹⁷⁸ Allen 8: 48, ep. 2095; Brian Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 24-25.

sellers, even if readers may have had, and researchers might still have, difficulty keeping up with him. Dissatisfaction with previous work, the desire to respond to critics, and the discovery of new relevant proofs for previous claims induced him to revise what he had already published.¹⁷⁹

Almost immediately after the printing of his Jerome, Erasmus was already contemplating to revise it. On 17 October 1516, he wrote to Pieter Gillis to have Jerome, “properly bound,” sent expeditiously to him “for the addition of notes” (*propter annotationes adscribendas*).¹⁸⁰ Perhaps Erasmus wanted to annotate the printed copy in order to make corrections to or embellish his editorial interventions. Probably in 1518, he wrote to Bruno Amerbach, mentioning a mistake “in the critical notes on the letters which I rejected as ignorant,” no doubt a reference to his *censurae* on texts misattributed to Jerome. Erasmus wanted the error corrected in the “next edition.”¹⁸¹ The authorized editions printed between 1524 and 1537 show that the work of revision never ended. A notice in the front matter of the Parisian edition of 1533-1534 demonstrates this well. It presents “Annotations on the *scholia* of D. Erasmus of Rotterdam sent in late by the author.” In his revisions, Erasmus supplemented two *scholia*, called for the deletion of another *scholion* that was to be replaced with a new comment, and corrected a word from a passage in Jerome’s *Adversus Vigilantium*.¹⁸²

Erasmus’ readers noticed his editorial deficiencies. The Flemish Carthusian monk and humanist Levinus Ammonius wrote to Erasmus on 31 July 1528, assuring the renowned scholar of his good will towards him. Earlier that year a friend had made him a gift of “the book of St. Jerome’s letters, divided by you into three volumes and printed in 1524.” Ammonius was able to make his way through the edition more easily than editions that he had seen previously. He also found it easier to make notes and select at his leisure material that would benefit him or others. Affection for Erasmus prompted

¹⁷⁹ Ueli Dill, “Die Arbeitsweise des Erasmus beleuchtet anhand von fünf Basler Fragmenten,” *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 79 (1999): 2, 30.

¹⁸⁰ CWE 4: 98, ep. 477; Allen 2: 358, ep. 477; Dill, “Die Arbeitsweise,” 31. On Gillis, see CEBR 2: 99-101.

¹⁸¹ CWE 6: 189, ep. 902A. P. S. Allen preferred a date of 4 November 1517 (Allen 3: 131, ep. 705), whereas CWE argues for 4 November 1518.

¹⁸² *Opera* (1533-1534), 1: ††v verso.

him to point out briefly some things that he had encountered in passing so that by his diligence he could assist “your studies, most worthy of immortality,” and that he could spare Erasmus attacks from his critics, “who examine your works with prejudiced minds.” Ammonius hopes that his small service will find favour with Erasmus. In case he anticipates publishing another edition, he could take a close look at the points Ammonius has raised and make any changes or offer explanations, if he thinks this is worthwhile. But if, unconvinced by Ammonius’ suggestions, he does not want to undertake any revisions, he should burn them immediately. The Carthusian assembled his notes, thinking only of Erasmus’ good reputation. He asserts that Christian faith and the doctrines of the Church are not at issue, but merely correct readings and references. Nevertheless, Ammonius adds that he subjected Erasmus’ first and second editions of Jerome to a close comparison. The problems that he discovered in the former remained unchanged in the latter. Indeed, practically nothing has changed in the second edition, except for the addition of indices and the elucidation of one or two passages.¹⁸³ Ammonius might have thought that the boasts about improvements on the title page of the second edition of Jerome’s letters gave the editor more credit than was his due. We do not know what specific corrections Ammonius recommended, but in his studious attempt not to displease Erasmus his charge that the second edition is not much different from the first is a revealing one. In his reply, Erasmus wishes that he had received the recommendations earlier and admits: “I obviously produced that work in a hurry.”¹⁸⁴

Chevallon reprinted the cumulative title for the letters that appeared in the second edition with a notice confirming with a reference to Erasmus’ preface that the editor had revised and expanded the *scholia*. The preface was a new one, probably composed in January 1533. It ended with a warm tribute to the recently deceased William Warham (d. 1532), who had often wished to see and embrace “my Erasmus” one more time. Erasmus began the preface by admitting that when he ventured to correct Jerome’s letters and elucidate them with *scholia* he had not thoroughly grasped “the manifold riches amassed from the entire unfathomable apparatus of languages, dis-

¹⁸³ Allen 7: 427-28, ep. 2016. On Ammonius, see CEBR 1: 50-51.

¹⁸⁴ Allen 7: 515, ep. 2062.

ciplines, and literature.” He confesses that he had sinned in several ways when he had approached so difficult a task with incommensurate learning and inappropriate care. Taking refuge in the proverb that second efforts are better (*Adages* I.iii.38), Erasmus affirms that whatever occurred through initial carelessness he has repaired with a second attentiveness, something he has already done more than once. When he learned that Jerome’s letters were to be printed again in Paris, he revised, as much as time permitted, certain passages that he had previously noted and dispatched his revisions for the public benefit of scholarship. He would not rest until he could prove his good faith and hard work to the impartial and sincere reader. A hint of polemical fire follows his candid admissions and commitment to high standards when he hopes that heaven will improve the minds of those ingrates who carp at his careless slips or, which is worse, denounce his works without having read them.¹⁸⁵

Erasmus died before he could justify his fourth and final edition of Jerome. Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopius did this for him in a notice dated 13 August 1537 and printed on the verso of the title page of the *opera omnia*. The printers begin by boasting that *their* edition, “the last of all,” surpasses the second edition printed by Johann Froben, their father and father-in-law, as well as the one recently printed in France, by which they mean the edition printed by Chevallon. But they will not attribute its glory to their hard work but to the tireless diligence of DESIDERIUS ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM of venerable memory. He was not satisfied with the Parisian edition, and so “again he vigilantly revised the night-time labours of so great a man”—*denuo istas tanti viri vigilias vigilanter recognovit*. It is not entirely clear if by *vigiliae* the printers meant Jerome’s writings or Erasmus’ editorial commentary. Whatever the case may be, Erasmus, the tireless editor to whom glory was due, counted as a great man in this edition.

Although Erasmus’ name, whether asserted as the authoritative editor or combined with theological credentials, conspicuously made good his claim to the edition of Jerome, a legal device also served to protect his proprietary rights as well as those of the edition’s printer. This was the *privilegium* or privilege, the early modern precursor to copyright that prohibited reprinting a book for a specific time in a

¹⁸⁵ Allen 10: 145-46, ep. 2758.

given jurisdiction and that first emerged when in 1479 Bishop Rudolf von Scherenberg of Würzburg granted a monopoly to three printers to print a diocesan breviary.¹⁸⁶ In 1515, Matthias Schürer printed Erasmus' *Lucubrationes*, a collection of works beginning with the *Enchiridion*. The title page drew attention to the six-year imperial privilege that it enjoyed.¹⁸⁷ From the title page of the *Novum instrumentum*, readers knew that this first Erasmian edition of the New Testament was protected by a four-year privilege issued by the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1493-1519).

On the verso of the first volume's title page in the 1516 edition of Jerome, Froben printed a double privilege (figure 5), both papal and imperial, meant to protect the edition from piracy. Michael Hummelberg, who studied and taught canon law in Rome between 1514 and 1517, was, at Froben's request, able to secure the papal privilege.¹⁸⁸ Leo X threatened to condemn anyone who in any place reprinted the edition or part of it during the following five years. Maximilian I forbade any reprinting of the edition within the Empire during the same period on pain of the confiscation of books and a fine of ten marks. Privileges, despite their threats, did not successfully deter piracy, however.

Cologne was a centre of defiance. Eucharius Hirtzhorn (Cervicornus) printed Jerome's letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) with Erasmus' *argumentum* and *scholia* as well as Erasmus' biography of Jerome in two separate editions in 1517.¹⁸⁹ In 1517, a printer in Cologne who did not identify himself, produced an anthology of three letters—to Paulinus (ep. 53), Nepotian (ep. 52), and Laeta (ep. 107)—accompanied by Erasmus' editorial commentary.¹⁹⁰ Another anthology, containing the two letters to Heliodorus (epp. 14 and 60), Rusticus (ep.

¹⁸⁶ Elizabeth Armstrong, *Before Copyright: The French Book-Privilege System 1498-1526* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 3.

¹⁸⁷ *D. Erasmi Roterodami viri undecunq̃ue doctissimi Lucubrationes* (Strassburg: Matthias Schürer, 1515).

¹⁸⁸ Armstrong, *Before Copyright*, 13. On Hummelberg, see CEBR 2: 213-14.

¹⁸⁹ *Divi Hieronymi epistola lepidissima ad Eustochium virginem, de custodienda virginitate. D. Erasmi Roterodami scholijs nimis quam festiviter enarrata* (Cologne: Eucharius Cervicornus, 1517); CWE 61: xxx.

¹⁹⁰ *Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae tres, opera D. Erasmi Roterodami suae integritati iam restitutae* ([Cologne], 1517) = Houghton *NC5.Er153.D517h; Cambridge UL, Peterborough. K.6.13. The depiction on the title page of three crowns, the heraldic device of Cologne, identifies the place of publication.

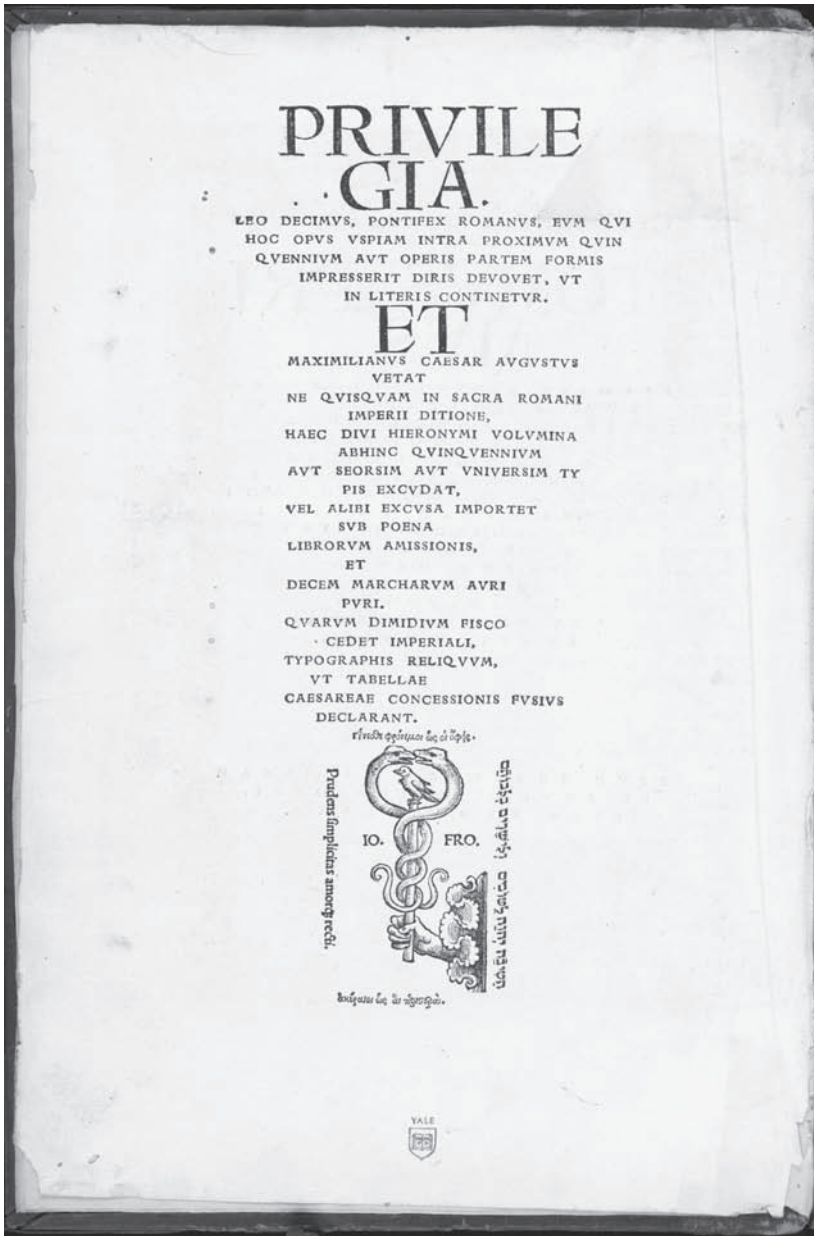


Fig. 5. The privileges of Pope Leo X and Emperor Maximilian I forbidding the reprinting of any part of Jerome's *Opera omnia* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516), verso of the title page of the first volume. Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

125), and to Marcella on Onasus (ep. 40) with the Erasmian paratexts, appeared in Cologne in 1518.¹⁹¹

The violation of the *privilegium* subjected Cervicornus to litigation. In March 1518, Bruno Amerbach informed Erasmus: “A certain Eucharius Cervicornus of Cologne has copied some letters of Jerome from our edition. We have taken him to court in Frankfurt for neglecting and indeed despising privileges from the highest authorities. He will pay the penalty, if I mistake not, for his rashness.” That Amerbach claimed credit for the edition may explain his resolve to prosecute Cervicornus. He adds that the Parisian printer Jean Petit “threatens to counterfeit the whole work. His efforts can be suppressed by one note from you.” Erasmus consequently wrote to Josse Bade, asking that he dissuade Petit “from behaving so badly.”¹⁹² If Bade carried out this wish, he must have been successful since Petit did not pirate the edition.

Jacques Saccon’s 1518 printing of Jerome’s letters, unlike the small Cologne editions of 1517 and 1518, makes no reference to Erasmus on its title page, but perceptive readers would have encountered the name of the famous editor in the printed *marginalia*. Next to the spurious exposition on Psalm 42, the Lyonnais printer added this note: “Our venerable brother Erasmus says that this letter has nothing to do with Jerome”—*Dicit venerabilis frater erasmus hanc epistolam nihil habere hieronymianum*. A marginal comment on Jerome’s reference to Justin Martyr’s diatribes in the *De viris illustribus* explains that, “according to Erasmus of Rotterdam, diatribes signify disputes among philosophers.” The two *marginalia* represent borrowings from Erasmus, from a *censura* in the second volume of the 1516 edition and from a *scholion* in the first volume.¹⁹³ While not all the other *marginalia* in the Lyonnais edition have Erasmus as their source, many do, even if they do not explicitly accredit him. The edition printed by Saccon represents a deliberate effort to consult Erasmus’ philological pronouncements and to transmit them in the editorial format established by Lelli in the fifteenth century. With the 1518 *Epistole*

¹⁹¹ *Divi Hieronymi epistolae tres ab Erasmo Roterodamo recognitae, cuius & argumentis & scholijs oppidoque elegantibus sunt illustratae* ([Cologne], 1518) = Cambridge UL, Peterborough. K.6.13. The heraldic device of Cologne again identifies the place of publication. Despite its title, the edition contains four, not three, letters.

¹⁹² CWE 5: 352, ep. 802; 388, ep. 815.

¹⁹³ *Epistole sancti Hieronymi* (Lyon: Jacques Saccon, 1518), part 2: 63r, 120v; *Opera* (1516), 2: 86r, 1: 139r.

sancti Hieronymi Saccon poured new wine into an old bottle, enhancing the inherited editorial tradition with commentary from the acclaimed Erasmian edition, an edition that made the incunabular tradition redundant.

Working in Lyon, safely outside the Empire, Saccon was not subject to imperial fines, and papal sanctions obviously did not deter him from reprinting Erasmus' *scholia*, often in excerpted form. Erasmus' edition of Jerome remained a favourite publication with Lyon-nais printers between 1525 and 1535. More bibliographical evidence of Erasmus' success in promoting the edition can be gleaned from three other reprints: two anthologies printed at the end of 1524 in Cologne by Eucharius Cervicornus of three letters each on eremiticism and monasticism—to Heliodorus (ep. 14), Rusticus (ep. 125), and Paulinus (ep. 58)—and on the safeguarding of virginity and the education of virgins vowed to God—to Laeta (ep. 107), Demetrias (ep. 130), and Gaudentius (ep. 128), as well as an Erasmian edition of the *De viris illustribus* printed in 1549 in Frankfurt am Main by Peter Braubach.

Editing Jerome in a Confessional Age

Editing Jerome bestowed on Erasmus not only proprietary rights; it also placed obligations on him. In 1516, he would have been convinced that he had fulfilled his obligations by completing the editorial labours of Hercules: he had published Jerome in correct form, elucidating his letters and liberating the genuine Jerome from the counterfeit. This served the humanist theological purpose of letting the Church Fathers compete with, perhaps even replace, the medieval scholastic doctors. Yet when in the years after 1516 Europe saw the rise of religious movements that equated fidelity to the gospel with rejection of the papacy, the Fathers were readily recruited in confessional disputes. Editing the Fathers frequently, but not always, meant aligning them either with evangelical or Catholic truth.

In December 1522, Pope Adrian VI (1522-1523) exhorted Erasmus to "confound, banish, repel" the heresies of Luther in imitation of "the examples and praiseworthy zeal of your Jerome, Augustine, and the other holy Fathers" and "with powerful reasons and the authorities of the holy Scriptures." Six months later, Bishop Cuthbert

Tunstall of London took a similar line when he insisted that Erasmus write against Luther, reminding him interrogatively: "By what title, I ask, was your Jerome held in greater honour than when he refuted most fiercely the heresies of his time?" All his toil in restoring the books of Moses and the prophets according to the *Hebraica veritas* and in writing his many commentaries did not win him greater renown than when he went into the arena against Helvidius, Jovinian, the Luciferians, Vigilantius, and the Pelagians.¹⁹⁴ The message was clear. Catholic prelates well-disposed towards Erasmus believed that his claim on Jerome obliged him to follow in the footsteps of his favourite among the Latin Fathers and refute Protestant heresy. Erasmus did eventually enter the polemical fray with Protestants, but not fiercely enough in the view of his Catholic critics. They, moreover, took aim at his edition of Jerome not least because the criticism in his commentary was directed at contemporary Catholicism, not at Protestants, who did not exist in 1516.

Even before the edition of Jerome appeared in print, Erasmus sensed it would encounter opposition. In his 1515 apology for the *Praise of Folly*, he informed Maarten van Dorp: "those friends of yours who take so much offence at my Folly will not approve my edition of Jerome either." To prove his point Erasmus recalls an encounter in England with "a certain Franciscan, a Scotist of the first rank." Erasmus does not reveal his name, but it was Henry Standish, the Franciscan provincial minister in England and future Bishop of St. Asaph. When he heard of Erasmus' editorial project, he was surprised that there should be anything in Jerome's writings beyond the comprehension of theologians—"and he such an ignorant man that I should be surprised if there are three lines in all the works of Jerome which he rightly understands."¹⁹⁵ Erasmus relates the same story in greater detail in a *scholion* on Jerome's letter to Paulinus (cp. 53). In a tavern during what "was more truly a drinking-bout than an exchange of views," the Franciscan explained difficult passages and insisted on an alternate reading in the letter with an ease that Erasmus equated with shameless stupidity. At a banquet on a later occasion, Standish belittled Erasmus in the presence of some of the humanist's friends. When someone mentioned the work on Jerome,

¹⁹⁴ Allen 5: 146, ep. 1324; 291, ep. 1367.

¹⁹⁵ CWE 3: 132, ep. 337. On Standish, see CEBR 3: 279-80.

he dismissed it: "He is not getting anywhere, for Erasmus is a good enough Latinist, but in the case of Jerome he understands nothing at all." The Franciscan's discussion about the letter to Paulinus convinced him that "the man has absolutely no competence in those matters."¹⁹⁶ Erasmus took great delight in recounting the story, although he expunged it from the edition printed by Chevallon, and it did not reappear in subsequent printings.¹⁹⁷

It was one thing to be disparaged for incompetence by an inveterate Scotist, quite another, however, to be targeted for heterodoxy. Writing from Louvain in 1518, Erasmus must have been amazed to be enjoying "halcyon days" and a "surprising degree of intimacy" with theologians, who "thank me openly for my Jerome" and make "no complaints about my New Testament."¹⁹⁸ Soon enough, however, after the publication of Erasmus' Jerome, critics emerged who saw it as a repository of unfaithfulness to Catholicism. The first of these was Stunica, the most persistent of Erasmus' early Catholic opponents. His plan to "crush this barbarian" included, as he explained to Juan de Vergara in January 1522, a purging of Erasmus' notes on Jerome's letters.¹⁹⁹ In April, Vergara warned Erasmus that Stunica "will show quite clearly that the second edition of the New Testament and the notes on Jerome and many of your other works are stuffed with ten thousand errors and flavoured with Lutheran impiety."²⁰⁰ In late April or early May 1522, Stunica published the *Erasmii Roterodami blasphemiae et impietates nunc primum ac proprio volumine alias redargutae*. It consisted of a preface, in which Stunica accused Erasmus of being "not only a Lutheran but the standard-bearer and moreover the leader of the Lutherans," and three books of excerpts from Erasmus' publication. The second of these presented passages from his commentary on Jerome as examples of the editor's blasphemies and impieties.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁶ CWE 61: 218-19.

¹⁹⁷ CWE 61: 275.

¹⁹⁸ CWE 5: 339, ep. 794.

¹⁹⁹ CWE 8: 341, ep. 2 of the Vergara-Zúñiga correspondence.

²⁰⁰ CWE 9: 70, ep. 1277. Erasmus published the second edition of the New Testament in 1519.

²⁰¹ Erika Rummel, *Erasmus and his Catholic Critics*, 2 vols. (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1989), 1: 165-66; Hilmar M. Pabel, "Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism of Erasmus' Edition of Jerome," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 6 (2004): 234-35; Stunica, *Erasmii Roterodami blasphemiae et impietates* (Rome: Antonius Bladus de Asula, 1522),

Another determined critic, Alberto Pio, the deposed Prince of Carpi, did not live to see the publication of his *Tres & viginti libri in locos lucubrationum variorum D. Erasmi Roterodami*, which Josse Bade printed in Paris in March 1531, two month's after Pio's death. This volume served as a potent weapon in the first wave of Italian anti-Erasmianism (1520-1535) that labeled the humanist a Lutheran.²⁰² Pio's review of Erasmus' publications included singling out passages for censure from the edition of Jerome. Several of these coincided with the passages excerpted by Stunica, comments, for example, that supposedly cast doubt on the sacramentality of confession and marriage, defended the telling of lies, and condemned warfare. Pio revealed more faults in the edition of Jerome by using Erasmus' commentary to accuse him of denigrating scholastic theology, undermining the authority of Scripture, and sympathizing with Arianism.²⁰³

Official censures of Erasmus' edition of Jerome came from Catholic inquisitors of books. The Index of the University of Paris (1544) condemned "the *scholia* and *antidoti* on the letters of St. Jerome." A *Catalogue of Heretical Books*, published in Venice (1554), banned the "annotations on Jerome." An *Index expurgatorius*, issued by order of King Philip II and printed by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp in 1571, provided a detailed list of which *scholia*, prefaces, *antidoti*, and *argumenta* in Erasmus' edition of Jerome had to be corrected or deleted. Offensive remarks about scholastic theologians and about the papacy aroused particular alarm. A catalogue of the Portuguese Inquisition, published in 1581, stated that the *scholia* and *antidoti* had to be corrected in conformity with the emendations found in "the third volume of the publication of Paris, Charlotte Guillard, in the year of our Lord 1546 or in conformity with that of Mariano Vittori whose works have been printed in Antwerp at the Plantin printing house, 1579."²⁰⁴ Vittori we shall encounter again below. The men-

A2r-A2v. Erasmus reproduces the preface in his *Apologia adversus libellum Jacobi Stunicae cui titulum fecit, blasphemiae et impietates Erasmi*. See LB IX: 372 A-D.

²⁰² Silvana Seidel Menchi, *Erasmus als Ketzer: Reformation und Inquisition im Italien des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993), 37. On Pio, see CEBR 3: 86-88.

²⁰³ Pabel, "Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism," 241-45.

²⁰⁴ *Index des livres interdits*, ed. J. M. de Bujanda, vol. 1, *Index de l'Université de Paris, 1544, 1545, 1547, 1549, 1551, 1556* (Sherbrooke: Centre d'Études de la Renaissance, 1985), 179; vol. 3, *Index de Venise, 1549, Venise et Milan, 1554* (Sherbrooke, 1987), 256; vol. 7, *Index d'Anvers, 1569, 1570, 1571* (Sherbrooke, 1988), 15-19; vol. 4,

tion of Guillard is none other than a reference to her printing of Erasmus' edition of Jerome (no. 11). Guillard was the widow of Claude Chevallon. After his death, she proved to be an astute businesswoman and leading female printer in Paris.²⁰⁵ Presumably in line with the condemnation of the Parisian Index of 1544—she was aware of the catalogue of “the holy order of Paris theologians”—Guillard printed at the end of the third volume a list of twenty-eight of the “more remarkable faults” in the *scholia* and *antidoti* through which Erasmus “scatters obvious errors, impieties, and manifest heresies.” The first of these faults is his sympathy for Anabaptism, a unique accusation in the Catholic assault on the edition of Jerome.²⁰⁶

Protestants invested substantially in patrology but displayed, with apparently one meagre exception, no interest in editing Jerome in the sixteenth century. Anthony Lane has analyzed twenty-three patristic anthologies printed between 1527 and 1565 in which mostly Protestants but also some Catholics used passages from the Fathers to assail the opposing side's and affirm their own position on the doctrine of justification.²⁰⁷ Wolfgang Musculus' edition of Basil the Great, printed in Basel in 1540, presented the Cappadocian Father as a witness to the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone and drew fire in 1544 from the Catholic controversialist Johannes Cochlaeus. Irenaeus became a precursor of Protestantism in the edition of *Against Heresies*, based on the text established by Erasmus, that the Reformed minister and professor, Nicolas des Gallars published in Geneva in 1570. In the same year and the same city, Theodore Beza, John Calvin's successor as leader of the Reformed church in Geneva, published a “rather ramshackle corpus” of ancient texts that

Index de l'Inquisition Portugaise, 1547, 1551, 1561, 1564, 1581 (Sherbrooke, 1995), 523. For a detailed analysis of the censoring of Erasmus' edition of Jerome in the *Index expurgatorius* (1571), see Pabel, “Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism,” 250-54. On the official prohibition of the edition, see also Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre*, 233-41.

²⁰⁵ Beech, “Charlotte Guillard,” 347-57.

²⁰⁶ *Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, opera omnia quae extant*, 9 vols. (Paris: Charlotte Guillard, 1546), 3: 107v, 108r. On the catalogue of errors printed by Guillard, see Pabel, “Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism,” 246-49.

²⁰⁷ Anthony N. S. Lane, “Justification in Sixteenth-Century Patristic Anthologies,” in *Auctoritas Patrum* (1993), 69-95.

assailed anti-Trinitarian heresies in order to show Catholics that these heresies had nothing to do with the Reformed faith.²⁰⁸

Editing old texts also played a part in the internecine conflicts among Protestants. Hiob Gast, who was a devoted student of the Lutheran Reformer Johannes Brenz and upon Brenz's recommendation took up in 1528 a pastorate in Brandenburg-Ansbach, wanted to affirm Christ's presence in the Eucharist by publishing an edition of the *De corpore et sanguine Domini* by Paschasius Radbertus (d. ca. 860) as "the main authority for the Lutheran doctrine of the sacraments."²⁰⁹ The edition, printed in 1528 and dedicated to Brenz, advertised itself on its title page as a pamphlet (*libellus*) on the "authentic understanding and use" of the Eucharist drawn from "the most ancient orthodox Fathers Cyprian, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Isichus, and Paschasius" that "clearly" served as "the spear of Achilles against those who twist and turn in the insane Sacramentarian spirit (who even contend most stubbornly with the opinions of the Fathers.)" From the letter at the end of the volume, the *aequus lector*—the impartial reader—learns of Gast's contempt both for "the fury of the Sacramentarians" and for "papist iniquity."²¹⁰ Associating Paschasius with third- and fourth-century authorities was not as daring as adulterating his treatise. To combat papist iniquity Gast altered the text by replacing Catholic with Protestant theological vocabulary.²¹¹

It is well-known that Luther sided with Augustine against Erasmus and Jerome. Augustine was the doctor of grace; Jerome held that salvation is the result of faith and good works. Eugene Rice claimed:

²⁰⁸ Irena Backus, *Lectures humanistes de Basile de Césarée: Traductions Latines (1439-1618)* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1990), 36-37, 41; Backus, *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation (1378-1615)* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 135, 138-39, 173, 178 (quotation).

²⁰⁹ Walther Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther: ihr Streit über das Abendmahl nach seinen politischen und religiösen Beziehungen*, vol. 1 (1924; repr., New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971), 567. I owe this reference to Rainer Henrich. On Gast, see Gustav Bossert, "Lebensbilder aus Franken: 3. Hiob Gast von Künzelsau," *Württembergische Vierteljahrshefte für Landesgeschichte* 8 (1885): 200-210.

²¹⁰ *Ex vetustissimorum orthodoxorum Patrum, Cypriani, Hilarii, Ambrosii, Augustini, Hieronymi, Isichii, & Pascasi, de genuino Eucharistiae negotii intellectu & usu, libellus... Contra omneis uesano Sacramentario spiritu uertiginosos (qui cum ipsi Patrum opinionibus pertinacissime innitantur) plane Achilleum Telum* (Hagenau: Johannes Secerius, 1528), M4v, M5r.

²¹¹ Pierre Petitmengin, "De adulteribus patrum editionibus: La critique des textes au service de l'orthodoxie," in *Les Pères de l'Église au XVII^e siècle: Actes du colloque de Lyon, 2-5 octobre 1991* (Paris: Cerf, 1993), 23.

"Luther attacked Jerome so violently, in part, because Erasmus admired him so much. The fact of the matter, though, is that there was little in Jerome that could appeal to a sixteenth-century Protestant." Protestants would have found repellant his commitment to monasticism, his praise of virginity at the cost of marriage, his defence of the cult of the saints, his reverence for the see of Rome.²¹² Yet this does not mean that they relegated Jerome to irrelevance. Heinrich Bullinger's criticism of Jerome's *Adversus Vigilantium* in *De origine erroris in divorum ac simulachrorum cultu* (1529, revised 1539) did not prevent the Swiss Reformer from purchasing in 1532 the 1516 Erasmian *opera omnia* of Jerome for eight gulden from Conrad Pellican, who in 1526 had begun teaching Greek and Hebrew in Protestant Zurich.²¹³ John Calvin drew on Jerome to prove that Geneva's ecclesiastical polity was based on the ancient tradition of the Church.²¹⁴

Luther and other Reformers, such as Melanchthon and Zwingli, made Jerome an ally in their attack on the papacy. In the wake of the Leipzig Disputation, Luther published his *Resolutio Lutherana super propositione sua decima tertia de potestate papae* (1519). The first patristic testimony supporting his repudiation of papal primacy is Jerome's letter to Evangelus (ep. 146)—or Evagrius as Erasmus and Luther called him—quoted from the *Decretum* of the twelfth-century canonist Gratian, who cited almost the entire letter as proof of a deacon's subordination to a priest (D 93 c. 24).²¹⁵

In 1538, Luther published the letter as a pamphlet with marginal annotations and a "preface" printed at the end: *Epistola Sancti Hieronymi ad Evagrium de potestate papae*. Jerome's reluctance to distinguish between presbyters and bishops appealed to Luther. One of the New

²¹² Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 138-40, quotation: 139.

²¹³ Willy Rordorf, "Kritik an Hieronymus: Die Schrift 'Contra Vigilantium' im Urteil Zwinglis und Bullingers," in *Heinrich Bullinger, 1504-1575: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum 400. Todestag*, 2 vols, ed. Ulrich Gäbler and Erland Herkenrath (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1975), 1: 54-63; Urs B. Leu and Sandra Weidmann, eds., *Heinrich Bullinger, Bibliographie*, vol. 3: *Heinrich Bullingers Privatbibliothek* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 2004), 123. On Pellican, see CEBR 3: 65.

²¹⁴ Irena Backus, "These Holy Men: Calvin's Patristic Models for Establishing the Company of Pastors," in *Calvin and the Company of Pastors: Papers Presented at the 14th Colloquium of the Calvin Studies Society, May 22-24, 2003*, ed. David Foxgrover (Grand Rapids, MI: CRC Product Services, 2004), 30.

²¹⁵ Ralph Hennings, "Hieronymus zum Bischofsamt und seine Autorität in dieser Frage bei Luther, Melanchthon und Zwingli," in *Auctoritas Patrum II: Neue Beiträge zur Rezeption der Kirchenväter im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Leif Grane, Alfred Schindler, and Markus Wriedt (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1998), 85-103, esp. 93-94.

Testament passages that the Church Father cites in support of his position is Titus 1: 5-7, which lists the qualifications for the presbyter and the bishop alike. He is to be, among other things, above reproach (*sine crimine*) and the husband of one wife, which inspires the sarcastic marginal comment: “that is of the universal Church, whose husband is the Pope, since he is above reproach, to be sure, most holy.” When Peter in 1 Peter 5: 1 addresses himself, in Jerome’s reading, to his fellow presbyters—*presbyteros in vobis precor compresbyter*—Luther observes: “St. Peter refers to himself not as lord of bishops, but as a fellow priest of priests.”²¹⁶

Jerome’s preference for the universality of the Church, as distinct from Roman particularity, elicits a torrent of comments from Luther. We must not think that there is a Church for the city of Rome and another for the rest of the world. Jerome insists: “The Gauls, the Britons, Africa, Persia, the Orient, India, and all the barbarian peoples (*barbarae nationes*) worship one Christ and follow one rule of truth. If you look for authority, the world is greater than the city.” To *barbarae* Luther keys another sarcastic note: “Consequently, they are also heretics, because they are in the Church of Christ and not in the Church of the Pope.” He obviously delights in explaining Jerome’s subsequent sentence by pointing out that the “universal Church is greater than the Church of the city of Rome, even in authority.”²¹⁷ Since Jerome maintains the equality of bishops, whether they reside in Rome, Gubbio, Constantinople, Rhegium, Alexandria, or Tanis, Luther writes with mocking alarm: “O horrible heresy of Jerome, who here is three and four times a Lutheran.” To Jerome’s statement that the power of riches or the lowliness of poverty does not make anyone more or less a bishop the German Reformer keys the final marginal annotation: “with the exception of the Roman curia, which surpasses even God’s paradise in holiness and humility.”²¹⁸

In the preface, Luther holds that it was fitting to publish Jerome’s letter and examine it in detail so that “young people without a knowledge of history could have a witness to the condition of the ancient

²¹⁶ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 309; Luther: *Epistola Sancti Hieronymi ad Evagrium de potestate papae* (Wittenberg: Nicolaus Schirlentz, 1538), A2v; WA 50: 339, n. 3. In the Vulgate, 1 Peter 5: 1 reads: *seniores ergo qui in vobis sunt obsecro consenior*.

²¹⁷ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 310; *Epistola...de potestate papae*, A3r-A3v; WA 50: 340, nn. 1, 2.

²¹⁸ *Epistola...de potestate papae*, A3v; WA 50: 340, nn. 2, 4.

Church against the remaining petty apologists and insipid and obviously feeble little protectors of that Roman whore, heading for serious disaster on her own account." In Jerome's day there was no such thing in the Church as an archbishop or patriarch or primate or metropolitan, much less a pope or universal pontiff. All bishops were equal. What a heretic Jerome would be today! In addition, he used the word "pope" interchangeably with "bishop," since he addressed both Augustine and Cyprian as "pope." The early Church possessed most holy men who were truly bishops, dedicated not to "their own glory or reputation, but the salvation of souls and the good of the Church." Luther asks: "What are our bishops like today?" He answers: "dead ghosts and wraiths, and if only they were such and not also vessels of God's wrath and fury, to the ruin of the churches." What would Jerome say if he beheld today's bishops, archbishops, and cardinals? What would he say if he saw the pope, not only treating no bishop as his equal, but compelling all to subject themselves to his lordship, oppressing the Church with his pestilential dogmas, robbing the wealth of the churches and of countries, treading on the necks of kings, requiring them to kiss his feet, arrogating to himself the worldly sword, outstripping every king in splendour, burdening Christendom with war and intrigue, not merely neglecting God's Word but absolutely ignoring, persecuting, and suffocating it, uttering blasphemies against all that belongs to Christ, slaying Christ's sheep, "in fine, dallying with, perverting, mocking, and revelling in the property, reputation, bodies and souls of the faithful with horrible cruelty and Satanic malice, and also hankering after greater and worse things." Surely, Jerome would not regard the pope as a "naturally living human being" but would believe him to be "Satan, raging in human form." "Stunned into silence," Jerome would die weeping.²¹⁹ In what must have been the only sixteenth-century Protestant edition of an Hieronymian text, Luther enlisted the authority of the Church Father, which "among the hirelings of the Roman tyranny" counted for "absolutely nothing,"²²⁰ in his offensive against the papacy. Of course, Luther's reading of Jerome was myopically selective.

²¹⁹ *Epistola...de potestate papae*, B1r-B2v; WA 50: 341-42.

²²⁰ *Epistola...de potestate papae*, B1r; WA 50: 341.

Among the Church Fathers, Jerome served as “a witness of the utmost importance” to the doctrine of papal primacy.²²¹ He wrote his first two letters to Pope Damasus (epp. 15, 16) in a time of doctrinal uncertainty in the East. Jerome announces his obligation to consult “the chair of Peter.” Since he follows Christ first and foremost, he unites himself with Damasus, “that is with the chair of Peter” and adds: “I know that the Church is built upon that rock. Whoever eats the lamb outside this house is unholy (*profanus*).” As three factions in Antioch try to claim him for their own and he senses that the ancient authority of the monks is against him, Jerome cries out in the meantime: “If anyone is united to the chair of Peter, he is on my side.”²²² At the Leipzig Disputation (1519) and in its immediate wake, Luther rejected the interpretation that the first of the two letters (ep. 15) meant that Christ founded solely or primarily the Church of Rome.²²³

By contrast, marginal annotations to the first two of the above three passages printed in Mariano Vittori’s edition of Jerome’s *opera omnia* that Sébastien Nivelle published in Paris (1578-1579) remind readers that “St. Jerome consults the chair of Peter” and that “He who eats the lamb outside the Roman Church is unholy.” A *marginalium* interprets the third passage as an instance of “the authority of the Roman Church.”²²⁴ Identical comments elucidate the same missives to Damasus included in Peter Canisius’ anthology of Jerome’s letters as printed by Nivelle in 1582, the *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae selectae*.²²⁵ Indeed, Jerome’s willingness to make common cause with anyone in communion with Rome was of special significance for Canisius, who quoted the affirmation in his own Catholic confession of faith (1571) after, among other things, anathematizing all heretics and proclaiming his willingness “to pour out life and blood” in witness to the Roman Church.²²⁶

Canisius, the leading Jesuit writer of the late sixteenth century, and Vittori, an Italian scholar who ended his days as a bishop, were

²²¹ Yvon Bodin, *Saint Jérôme et l’Église* (Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1966), 204.

²²² CSEL 54: 63-64, 69.

²²³ WA 59: 440, 448; WA 2: 640.

²²⁴ *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae reperiri poterunt*, 9 vols. (Paris: Sébastien Nivelle, 1578-1579) 2: cols. 175, 179.

²²⁵ *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae selectae* (Paris: Sébastien Nivelle, 1582), 33r, 33v, 36r.

²²⁶ PCE 6: 745.

examples of Counter-Reformation humanism.²²⁷ Thanks to them Catholicism easily and repeatedly asserted confessional control of Jerome's writings from the 1560s onwards, but not all editions of Jerome produced in Catholic Europe displayed a conspicuously confessional character. As John O'Malley has shown, the traditional category "Counter Reformation" as well as the more recent terms "Catholic Reform" and "Confessional Catholicism," while useful in particular instances, do not individually or combined comprehend the complex reality of Catholicism in early modern Europe or of what O'Malley calls the "Catholic side" of the Reformation.²²⁸ From the second half of the fifteenth century into the first several decades of the seventeenth century, the printed Jerome was by and large a Catholic Jerome, but he was not exclusively a Counter-Reformation or confessionalized Jerome.

In 1562, Lucantonio Giunta printed in Venice an anthology of Jerome's letters: *Epistole di S. Girolamo, dottore della chiesa*. The title page indicates that the work was "recently translated from Latin into the Tuscan tongue" by the Florentine Giovan Francesco Zeffi (d. 1546)²²⁹ and announces the devotional purpose of the book. Besides acquainting readers with many "most important and most beautiful passages from Sacred Scripture," Jerome's letters, "written to various persons while he was in the desert," teach things that "are very useful and necessary for those persons who wish to live piously (*religiosamente*) and as true Christians." Giunta's dedicatory preface, addressed to Domenico Bolani, the Bishop of Brescia, merely refers to the letters as "most splendid (*bellissima*) works, composed by a most saintly and most learned man." Among the terse printed notes scattered in the margins appears a reference to the Council of Trent. In his preface to the biblical books of Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs), Jerome mentions that the Church reads the books of Judith,

²²⁷ I owe the term Counter-Reformation humanism to Ronald K. Delph, "Polishing the Papal Image in the Counter-Reformation: The Case of Agostino Steuco," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 23 (1992): 34-47; and "From Venetian Visitor to Curial Humanist: The Development of Agostino Steuco's 'Counter'-Reformation Thought," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994): 102-39.

²²⁸ John W. O'Malley, *Trent and all that: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

²²⁹ On Zeffi, see Angelo Maria Bandini, *De Florentina Iuntarum typographia eiusque censoribus ex qua Graeci, Latini, Tusci scriptores ope codicum manuscriptorum a viris clarissimis pristinae integritati restituti in lucem prodierunt*, 2 parts (1791; repr., Ridgewood, NJ: Gregg Press, 1965), 1: 136-44.

Tobit, and Maccabees but does not consider them as part of the canon of Scripture. The marginal comment points out that these books “were approved at the Council of Trent,” a reference to the first decree of the Council’s fourth session (8 April 1546) that listed the books it accepted as canonical.²³⁰ This *marginalium* and the dedication are the only obvious indicators of the Catholic context of the anthology.

Six years after the Venetian anthology, in 1568, Willem Silvius, printer royal in Antwerp, issued a scholarly edition of Jerome’s first ten letters: *Epistolarum D. Hieronymi Stridonensis decas prima*. The enumeration of the letters corresponds to the first ten letters in Erasmus’ edition. The title page of the Antwerp edition made clear that this first decade of letters was “both purified of many blemishes and elucidated by very erudite *scholia*” thanks to “the most learned man, Master Henricus Gravius.” Gravius, a native of a small town in Guelders, was born early in the sixteenth century and joined the Order of Preachers at a young age. He mastered Latin, Greek, and Hebrew and was “renowned and highly distinguished for his interpretation of Sacred Scripture and of the ancient Fathers of the Church.” He died in 1552 while sub-prior of the friary in Nijmegen. The Dominican patrologist’s first publication consisted of a series of brief notes that emended the text of Cyprian in Erasmus’ edition printed by Peter Quentel in Cologne in 1544. Two years later, he produced an edition of John Damascene. His edition of Paulinus of Nola appeared posthumously (1560), thanks to a fellow Dominican at Nijmegen, Johannes Antonianus.²³¹ The latter also took responsibility and credit for publishing Gravius’ *scholia* on Jerome. His *scholia* on all of Jerome’s letters first appeared in a Paris printing of Vittori’s

²³⁰ *Epistole di S. Girolamo, dottore della chiesa* (Venice: Lucantonio Giunta, 1562), *ij recto, 214r. For the Tridentine decree, see Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed & Ward; Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 1: 663-64.

²³¹ On Silvius, see Anne Rouzet, *Dictionnaire des imprimeurs, libraires et éditeurs des XVe et XVIe siècles dans les limites géographiques de la Belgique actuelle* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1975), 201-203. On Gravius, see *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne...nouvelle édition*, 45 vols. (1854, repr., Graz: Akademische Druck u. Verlagsanstalt, 1966-1970), 17: 390, s. v. “Grave (Henri de);” *Nouvelle biographie universelle depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu’à nos jours*, 46 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1852-1866), 21: 740, s. v. “Grave (Henri);” Quetif and Echard, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, 2: 140-42, s.v. “F. Henricus Vermolanus Gravius,” 2: 140 (quotation); on Antonianus, see *ibid.*, 2: 283, s. v. “F. Johannes Antonianus.”

edition of the *opera omnia* in 1609 and then again in the same edition printed in Cologne in 1616.

Lacking any references to Protestants, nothing suggests that the *Epistolarum decas prima* is inspired by Catholic polemic. Antonianus mentions Erasmus in his preface, but without criticism. He corrected many corruptions that had over time crept into Jerome's text in such a way that "what up to now has remained buried in neglect and shrouded in darkness appears to have returned intact." Nothing, however, can be so perfect in every detail that cannot improve over time. After Erasmus, Henricus Gravius, well-versed in literature and an outstanding expert in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew "wrote out elegant and almost countless corrections to Jerome's letters." Jerome, a victim of the "negligence of unskilled scribes" ought with every right to be congratulated for being healed of "so many wounds" by the zeal of Gravius. Antonianus has included Gravius' observations or annotations on the letters. He composed these not with a view to benefit youth through an annotated handbook on grammar and rhetoric (*non quidem eo consilio, vt annotata arte Grammatices, atque Rhetorices iuuentuti consuleret*), since Erasmus had accomplished this "with great care," but to show the "origins and sources of topics." By comparing Jerome with Jerome, "he gathered together as it were into one little sheaf congruent opinions in order to explain not only what Jerome himself had written or what his source was but with what wit and charm he had changed the same expression into one or another different form."²³² In his *scholia*, or annotations, as the edition also calls them, Gravius is most interested in pointing out how phrases from Jerome allude to classical authors, often Cicero, to the Bible, and to earlier Christian writers, such as Tertullian. Gravius shows especially how one phrase echoes passages in other writings by Jerome.

Antonianus was familiar with both Erasmus' and Vittori's edition. He informs readers on the verso of the title page that as he was about to send Gravius' corrected text of Jerome's first ten letters to press, he had the good fortune to obtain transcriptions of the letters carefully corrected by Vittori and recently printed in Rome. (Vittori's first edition of the letters appeared in 1564-1565.) Asterisks in the

²³² *Epistolarum D. Hieronymi prima decas* (Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1568), A4v-A5r.

margins of the letters indicate Vittori's corrections, crosses a variant reading noted by Gravius.²³³

After the preface, Antonianus added a series of ten *argumenta* corresponding to the ten letters. These appear again individually at the head of each letter. Antonianus must have composed the *argumenta* after consulting those of Erasmus. In his summary of the consolatory letter to Heliodorus on the death of his nephew Nepotian (ep. 60), Erasmus writes that after a digression Jerome comes to the consolation: *Deinde consolationem aggrediens, uarijs exemplis ostendit, quatenus Christiano sit in amicorum morte dolendum*—"Then, setting out on the consolation, he shows with different examples to what extent a Christian is permitted to mourn the death of friends." Antonianus turns the gerund *aggrediens* into a principal verb, *aggreditur*, the principal verb *ostendit* into a gerund, *ostendens*, omits the mention of the examples, and slightly rearranges the syntax of the clause beginning with *quatenus* to produce the beginning of a remarkably similar sentence: *Deinde consolationem aggreditur, ostendens quatenus Christiano in amicorum morte dolendum sit*—"Then he sets out on the consolation, showing to what extent a Christian is permitted to mourn the death of friends." Antonianus adds another clause of his own making to the sentence that reinforces the limit of a Christian's mourning: he should not weep so much that he misses the goal of piety that is inherent in the promises of bliss. Erasmus closes his introduction to the letter to Rusticus (ep. 125) by noting that Jerome "particularly reproaches those who under the pretense and pretext of being a monk (*sub praetextu ac titulo monachi*) give in to their vices." A slight echo comes through in Antonianus' comment that "Jerome rails at those who under the pretense of being a monk (*sub praetextu monachi*) pursue riches and profits" Both Erasmus and Antonianus begin the *argumentum* to the letter to the widow Salvina (ep. 79) by describing her as a most noble woman—*Salvina mulier nobilissima*. "While still a girl," Erasmus continues, "she had lost her young and noble husband"—*puella adhuc, iuuenem maritum ac nobilem amiserat*. Antonianus elaborates on this. He adds that Salvina was very powerful (*potentissima*) and relates the circumstances of her bereavement: "in the very flower of youth, she had lost her husband Nebridius, a noble and, moreover,

²³³ Ibid., Alv.

young man”—*in ipso flore iuuentae, Nebridium maritum, nobilem virum, ac iuuenem amiserat.*²³⁴

In 1572, Matías Gast, a prominent printer of Salamanca who specialized in scholarly and liturgical books, produced a selection of Jerome's letters edited by Juan Corduba. The title identified the pedagogical objective of the edition: *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae aliquot selectae, in usum gymnasiorum ubi Latina lingua docetur, ut habeant adolescentes unde eloquentiam simul & pietatem hauriant.* The anthology, meant for schools that taught Latin, was to give youths the opportunity to learn or “absorb” eloquence and piety at the same time. The official approval of the book and the permission to print it appeared at the beginning of the anthology. Corduba, Dean of the Church of Cordova (*Ecclesiae Cordubensis Decanus*), mentions in his preface that he shared his plan for the edition “with Fathers of the Society of Jesus.” His goal was to give students learning Latin a Christian alternative to Cicero. Jerome's letters provide the nourishment of eloquence, but above all they inflame noble young minds with the love of Christ alone. Corduba did not want to banish Cicero from the schools, but he wanted some book to discuss how the Christian world—or the Christian republic as distinct from the Roman one—should be ordered, a book that calls to mind the heavenly Jerusalem, that esteems humility, praises virtue, and preaches charity.²³⁵

At the end of the preface he bids farewell to his reader and enjoins him to make sure that he reads through, drinks in, and even busily studies Jerome since there is no type of teaching which is not able to be helped by him: *Vale, et Hieronymum euoluere, imbibere atque etiam ediscere sedulo curato, quando nullum est doctrinae genus, quod hinc adiuuari non queat.* The last sentence corresponds to the conclusion of the brief *Divi Hieronymi Vita* that follows the preface: *Hunc omnis sexus, omnis aetas discat, euoluat, imbibat: nullum doctrinae genus est quod hinc non*

²³⁴ Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 9v, 18v, 32v; Antonianus: *Epistolarum D. Hieronymi prima decas* (Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1568), A7v, A8v.

²³⁵ *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae aliquot selectae, in usum gymnasiorum ubi Latina lingua docetur, ut habeant adolescentes unde eloquentiam simul & pietatem hauriant*, ed. Juan Corduba (Salamanca: Matías Gast, 1572), A3v, A4r, A4v. For a bibliographical description, see Lorenzo Ruiz Fidalgo, *La imprenta en Salamanca (1501-1600)*, 3 vols. (Madrid: Arco/Libros, 1994), 2: 728, no. 812. On Gast, see Delgado Casado, *Diccionario de impresores españoles*, 1: 267-68, no. 325; and María Marsá, *La imprenta en los Siglos de Oro* (Madrid: Ediciones del Laberinto, 2001), 109.

queat adiuuari, nullum vitae institutum quod huius praeceptis non formetur, soli Haeretici Hieronymum horreant, & oderint quos ille solos acerrimos hostes habuit —“Let every man and woman, every age, learn, read, and drink him in. There is no type of teaching that cannot be helped by him, no rule of life that is not moulded by his precepts. Let the heretics alone dread and hate Jerome, whom he considered his sole and bitterest enemies.”²³⁶

Corduba obviously read Erasmus, for the conclusion of his biography reproduces that of Erasmus’ *Vita Hieronymi*.²³⁷ The only difference is that he did not include the adverb *semper* (always) between *solos* and *acerrimos*. Indeed, Corduba’s biography is essentially a condensed version of that of Erasmus. The colophon of the anthology conspicuously acknowledges dependence on Erasmus. Presumably, Corduba inserted the brief notice about the addition of “annotations from the *scholia* of Erasmus of Rotterdam.” These annotations are printed in the margins of the anthology. They represent a selection from Erasmus’ *scholia*. Many annotations accompany Jerome’s letter to Paulinus (ep. 53), while several letters benefit from only a few Erasmian elucidations, and others lack any commentary.²³⁸

The anthologies printed in Catholic Venice (1562), Antwerp (1568), and Salamanca (1572) reveal a social production of texts,²³⁹ resting on the work of printers, a translator, a deceased annotator, and editors, that is immune to a confessionalized dissemination of ancient Christian writings. The *Epistolarum decas prima* avoids overt symptoms of confessionalism at a time when the application of the Church Fathers to confessional polemics was common. The editions of Jerome’s letters printed by Giunta, Silvius, and Matías Gast present the Father respectively as a resource for piety, scholarship, and the education of Christian youth without at the same time construing him as anyone’s theological opponent. If Jerome was an antidote to anyone, it was, from Corduba’s perspective, to Cicero and pagan authors, not to heretics. The Cordovan cleric and the Netherlandish

²³⁶ *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae aliquot selectae*, A5r, A6v.

²³⁷ *Erasmi Opuscula: A Supplement to the Opera Omnia*, ed. Wallace K. Ferguson (1933; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1978), 190.

²³⁸ *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae aliquot selectae*, 121r-130r (letter to Paulinus), Z3r (colophon).

²³⁹ The social nature of literary production is a persistent theme of McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*.

Dominican, Antonianus, without compunction and without any criticism borrowed or copied from Erasmus, whose Jerome had elicited accusations of heresy from other quarters within the Catholic Church.

Peter Canisius' Jerome, however, was a "hammer of heretics." This epithet, in a marginal comment in the 1565 anthology of Jerome's letters, accompanied praise for Jerome's "zeal for the faith against all heresies" in a letter (ep. 91) by Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis.²⁴⁰ The 1565 edition was the second in what would become a succession of some forty editions printed into the first half of the nineteenth century. Canisius' anthology first appeared in print in 1562 under the title *Epistolae Beati Hieronymi Stridonensis, eloquentissimi & praestantissimi Ecclesiae Doctoris, in libros treis distributae*. Sebaldus Mayer printed the first two editions in Dillingen, the small Swabian residential town of the Bishop of Augsburg, Cardinal Otto Truchseß von Waldburg. Sébastien Nivelles printed three editions in Paris (1582, 1583, 1588), the third with his son Robert, and was responsible for combining the editorial work of Canisius and Vittori. The title page of the 1582 edition announced that for the first time Jerome's letters in Canisius' anthology were corrected against Vittori's edition and clarified by Vittori's *argumenta*. In fact, a few of Canisius' *argumenta* from the 1565 edition survived as did some of the printed *marginalia*, although Nivelles imported a great many *marginalia* from his 1578-1579 printing of Vittori's edition of Jerome. Nivelles printed one of Vittori's *scholia* at the end of the letter to Marcella (ep. 41) that first appeared in the 1582 anthology. Vittori criticized Erasmus for arguing that the Church was founded not on Peter but on Christ.²⁴¹ As of 1582, most editions of Canisius' anthology reflected the changes introduced by Nivelles. In Lyon, a 1592 edition added an abbreviated version of Vittori's biography of Jerome. The text of the final edition of the anthology, printed in 1845, was based on the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century edition of Jerome's works by Jean Martianay. The anthology

²⁴⁰ *Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis, eloquentissimi et praestantissimi Ecclesiae Doctoris, in libros treis distributae, & ad collationem veterum exemplarium permultis in locis restitutae, vt haec secunda editio priorem longe antecellat* (Dillingen: Sebaldus Mayer, 1565), 48r.

²⁴¹ *D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae* (1582), 400v.

omitted the *marginalia* of the 1582 edition but retained the *argumenta* and Vittori's *scholion*.²⁴²

An anthology translated into French by Jean de Lavardin resembled the 1582 version of Canisius' anthology. Lavardin's *Épistres Saint Hierosme divisées en trois livres* was first printed in Paris in 1585 and appeared with the revised title *Épistres familières de Saint Hierosme, divisées en trois livres* at least four more times: in Paris in 1596 and 1602 and in Rouen thanks to two different printers in 1608. Lavardin, who dedicated the *Épistres* to Cardinal Charles de Bourbon, assigned no credit to Canisius, whose selection of letters he made his own, or to Vittori, whose *argumenta* he translated. Lavardin supplied most of his own *marginalia*. Only a few of the comments from the 1582 edition appear in the margins of Lavardin's translation, including Canisius' reference to Jerome, the hammer of heretics: *S. Hierosme appelé le Maillet des Heretiques*.²⁴³ In his preface, Lavardin identified his target: the Satanic furies of his day. A French translation of Jerome's letters should help stop the spread of their "fallacious and pestilential doctrine." Lavardin obviously had the Huguenots, or French Calvinists, in mind. With a marginal comment on Jerome's *Adversus Vigilantium* he asked his reader to listen to how easily Jerome unravels the argument that "our Huguenots put before us every day."²⁴⁴

Canisius addressed the preface to his anthology to the rector, professors, and students of the fledgling University of Dillingen. In 1563, Canisius, as provincial of the Upper German province of the Society of Jesus, completed negotiations with Cardinal Truchseß von Waldburg that led to the transfer of the university to the Society so that by the 1565 edition of the *Epistolae*, which contained a revised preface, the faculty to whom he addressed himself were fellow Jesuits.²⁴⁵

²⁴² *D. Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae selectae* (Lyon: Jean Hugetan, 1592), ẽ8v-ĩ8v; *Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae selectae juxta editionem D. Petri Canisi, necnon ad exemplar D. Martianay S. Benedicti monachi* (Paris and Lyon: Librairie catholique de Perisse frères, 1845), 305 (*scholion*). For the most recent study of Canisius' anthology, see Hilmar M. Pabel, "Peter Canisius as a Catholic Editor of a Catholic St. Jerome." *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 96 (2005): 171-97.

²⁴³ *Épistres Saint Hierosme divisées en trois livres* (Paris: Guillaume Chaudière, 1585), 68v.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, a2r-a2v; 410r.

²⁴⁵ Peter Rummel, "Die Anfänge des Dillinger Jesuitenkollegs St. Hieronymus in den Jahren 1563 bis 1565," *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Augsburger Bistums-geschichte* 25 (1991): 62-64.

The preface reveals Canisius' objectives as Jerome, the university's patron, went forth, decked out as it were in new clothes (*noua veluti veste commendatus*).²⁴⁶ He wanted an edition that was practical, that championed Catholic truth against heresy, and that repudiated Erasmian inspiration. The Jesuit editor undertook to liberate Jerome's letters from the "enormous volumes," in which they had been confined, and to transfer them, anthologized, to a modest book or manual. This would be appropriate for private reading or for use in schools.²⁴⁷ Canisius, who hoped for a revitalization of Jerome's spirit in his own day, saw about him moral and spiritual decay, which led to the mocking of ancient piety, the rejection of the purity of the sacraments, and the abolition of the cult of the saints. One's honour was not tantamount to virtue; merits did not correspond to the good deeds of the godly. Faith at least flowed from the lips, and we have decided that we ought to be justified and saved as long as we put our faith in the grace of Christ.²⁴⁸ Canisius clearly was assailing Protestantism here, and again when he deplored the lurking about of what he called the "Vigilantian plague." Consequently, at the end of the anthology he added Jerome's treatise against Vigilantius as a defence of Catholic teaching on the cult of the saints.²⁴⁹

Canisius anticipated that someone might ask what he thought of Erasmus. The Jesuit conceded that his reputation in *belles lettres* was beyond reproach. Yet he wished that Erasmus had limited himself to literature or had kept away from sacred studies or had professed his ability to judge the writings of the Fathers with less pride and with a more honest heart. Once Erasmus began to play the part of a theologian, he thought too highly of himself. There was no shortage of eggs for Luther to hatch, an allusion to the claim that Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched. Erasmus the monk attacked the monks; hardly a philosopher, he scorned the scholastic doctors. When it came to the teachings of the Church, he preferred to pursue a theology of scepticism.²⁵⁰ His disciples, the Erasmians, were an

²⁴⁶ PCE 3: 281.

²⁴⁷ PCE 3: 278.

²⁴⁸ PCE 3: 277.

²⁴⁹ PCE 3: 279.

²⁵⁰ PCE 3: 280.

irreverent lot, who disparaged religious orders, scolded clergymen, and babbled rubbish about and mocked holy rituals.²⁵¹

Mariano Vittori also conceived of his edition of Jerome as an antidote to that of Erasmus. He belonged to a new wave of Italian Catholic anti-Erasmianism, beginning around the middle of the sixteenth century, “stimulated and promoted by men who directed the destiny of the Church—by popes and cardinals.”²⁵² This Italian priest and humanist served three prominent reform-minded cardinals: Marcello Cervini, the future Pope Marcellus II (1555), Reginald Pole, and Giovanni Morone, who presided over the final sessions of the Council of Trent in 1563. He began teaching theology in 1565, perhaps at the newly established Seminario Romano. In 1566, together with Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto, the future prefect of the Vatican Library, he contributed to the revision of the text of the fourth part—on the Lord’s Prayer—of the Catechism of the Council of Trent; most of his revisions were incorporated into the final text, published in the same year. In 1569, Pius V named him a consultor to the commission charged with revising the Vulgate. Vittori became Bishop of Amelia in 1571 and was translated to the see of his native Rieti at the beginning of June 1572. That very month he succumbed to an illness and died on 29 June.²⁵³

But for his edition of Jerome, Vittori might have receded into historical obscurity. Paolo Manuzio printed his edition of Jerome’s letters in folio in 1564-1565 (three volumes) and in quarto in 1566 (four volumes). Before he died, Vittori was at work on an *opera omnia*. This appeared in print in nine folio volumes in Rome between 1571 and 1576. As of 1565, for about a decade, Vittori’s Jerome was the only patristic edition printed in Rome.²⁵⁴

In 1578-1579, the *opera omnia* appeared in two separate editions in Antwerp and Paris. Christopher Plantin, one of Europe’s leading printers, produced the Antwerp edition. The deletion of the anti-

²⁵¹ PCE 3: 281.

²⁵² Silvana Seidel Menchi, *Erasmus als Ketzer*, 287.

²⁵³ Angelo Sacchetti Sassetti, *La vita e gli scritti di Mariano Vittori* (Rieti: Tipografia S. Trinchì, 1917), 29-43, 63-67; Pedro Rodríguez and Raúl Lanzetti, “Un collaborateur inconnu du ‘Catéchisme Romain’: Mgr Mariano Vittori,” *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique* 78 (1983): 5-33, esp. 12, 22.

²⁵⁴ Pierre Petitmengin, “À propos des éditions patristiques de la Contre-Réforme: Le ‘Saint-Augustin’ de la Typographie Vaticane,” *Recherches augustiniennes* 4 (1966): 203.

Erasmian epithets in Vittori's prefaces and *scholia* constitute the most important change to this edition. Most of these took aim at Erasmus' ethnic origins. Vittori denounced him as the Batavian or Dutch interpreter, emender, corrector, and tamperer.²⁵⁵ Johannes Molanus (Jan Vermeulen), a theologian at Louvain, who was elected as rector of the university in 1578 and served as the apostolic and royal censor of books in the Spanish Netherlands, added this judgment (*censura*) at the end of the third volume:

Many who are outstanding in piety and doctrine have taken offence that here and there Erasmus should be called the Batavian interpreter, the Hollander, the dreamer, sometimes even the heretic [or] the worst of all heretics and that other things should have been written against him beyond Christian moderation. And for this reason we have omitted them in this edition without detriment to the *scholia*. And these things had displeased even their author after the edition had been published, as we learned from Rome.²⁵⁶

The final comment must be disingenuous. Vittori did not repent of his anti-Erasmianism in the Roman *opera omnia*.

Sébastien Nivelles in Paris retained, and did not blunt, Vittori's hostility towards Erasmus. Nivelles a leading Parisian printer, who had married a niece of Charlotte Guillard, was intimately connected with the Holy or Catholic League, a religious and military organization led by the aristocratic Guise family and dedicated to the extirpation of Protestantism in France. Nivelles's sons, Robert and Nicolas, printed for the League; his son Pierre was an officer of the house of Guise.²⁵⁷ Nivelles reprinted the *opera omnia* in 1602. Other seventeenth-

²⁵⁵ C. Ruelens and A. de Backer, *Annales Plantiniennes depuis la fondation de l'imprimerie plantinienne à Anvers jusqu'à la mort de Chr. Plantin (1555-1589)* (1866; reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1967), 198; Leon Voet, *The Plantin Press (1555-1589): A Bibliography of the Works Printed and Published by Christopher Plantin at Antwerp and Leiden*, 6 vols. (Amsterdam: Van Hoeve, 1980-1983), 3: 1129; Pabel, "Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism," 258.

²⁵⁶ *Opera divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, doctoris ecclesiae*, 9 vols. (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1578-1579), 3: 637. On Molanus, see *Biographie nationale publiée par l'Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, 44 vols. (Brussels: H. Thiry—Van Buggenhoudt; Bruylant-Christophe; Émile Bruylant, 1866-1986), 15 (1899): cols. 48-55, s. v. "Molanus (Jean Vermeulen dit)," by Alph. Wauters.

²⁵⁷ Denis Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)* (Geneva: Droz, 1975), 137-39; Philippe Renouard, *Répertoire des imprimeurs parisiens: libraires, fondeurs de caractères et correcteurs d'imprimerie depuis l'introduction de l'imprimerie à Paris (1470) jusqu'à la fin du seizième siècle*, ed. Jeanne Veyrin-Ferrer and Brigitte Moreau (Paris: M. J. Minard, 1965), 324-26.

century Vittorian editions appeared in Paris (1609, 1623, 1643) and Cologne (1616). The Cologne edition, printed by Antonius Hierat, belonged to “a systematic attempt” on the part of the printer to produce a collected patrology in a Catholic milieu. Between 1616 and 1618, Hierat “published in succession the complete works of the principal Fathers and a *Magna bibliotheca veterum Patrum* in fourteen volumes” that arranged the Fathers in chronological order and espoused the confessional objective of asserting against Protestants the immutable nature of Catholic teaching and tradition.²⁵⁸ His Jerome reproduced the *censura* by Molanus and the prefaces and *scholia* as they had appeared in the Antwerp edition.²⁵⁹

The title page of the 1564-1565 edition announced that from the letters of Jerome and his books against heretics “a thousand and more errors had been removed by improvement upon Erasmus.” The edition included Vittori’s biography of Jerome, “formerly falsely reported by Erasmus and by others.” We even encounter the boast that Vittori had placed in the margins references to biblical passages cited by Jerome, something that was lacking in the “Erasmian edition.” These anti-Erasmian advertisements reappear in the 1566 edition but are absent from the relevant title page of the Roman (and Parisian) *opera omnia*. The Antwerp *opera omnia* does not mention Erasmus on its title pages.

The attack on Erasmus continued in the prefaces. The fourth volume of the Roman *opera omnia* was printed in 1571. It contained Jerome’s commentaries on the four major prophets. Vittori dedicated the volume to Pope Pius V (1566-1572). In the dedicatory preface, the editor recalls that in his *scholia* on Jerome’s letters he repressed the “ravings (*deliramenta*) of the Batavian.”²⁶⁰ Volume 7 appeared in 1572 and contained Jerome’s psalm commentaries. Vittori’s dedicatory preface to the newly elected Gregory XIII (1572-1585) begins by observing that the first three volumes had been “purified of many

²⁵⁸ Jean-Louis Quantin, *Le catholicisme classique et les Pères de l’Église: Un retour aux sources (1669-1713)* (Paris: Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, 1999), 167 (quotations); Pierre Petitmengin, “Les patrologies avant Migne,” in *Migne et le renouveau des études patristiques: Actes du Colloque de Saint-Flour*, ed. A. Mandouze and J. Fouilheron (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985), 25.

²⁵⁹ *Sancti Hieronymi Stridoniensis opera omnia quae extant*, 9 vols. (Cologne: Antonius Hierat, 1616), 3: collection of *scholia*, 94.

²⁶⁰ *D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis opera omnia*, 9 vols. (Rome: In aedibus populi Romani, 1571-1576), 4: +3r.

errors and freed from the insomnia of the Batavian.”²⁶¹ Plantin reprinted the prefaces to Pius V and Gregory XIII without the pejorative references to Erasmus.²⁶²

Vittori attacked Erasmus most vociferously and repeatedly in the original preface, addressed to Pius IV (1559-1565).²⁶³ It is impossible, he begins, to explain why heretics try to destroy the Church. The most dangerous assault comes from those who attack under the pretense of orthodoxy, for, according to the proverb, there is no worse plague than a familiar foe, an allusion to Boethius who in the *Consolation of Philosophy* (3.5) asked: “What plague is more effective in causing harm than a familiar foe.” “To this sort belonged Erasmus of Rotterdam,” continues Vittori, “who, having publicly laid claim to the duties of a Catholic person, poured out poison under the pretext of a remedy; offering bread with one hand, he threw a stone with the other.” The latter charge echoes Euclio’s complaint in Plautus’ *Aulularia* (195) that Megadorus “throws a stone with one hand and holds out bread with the other,” a sentiment to which Jerome explicitly refers in a letter (ep. 81) to his estranged friend Rufinus on the eve of their most bitter dispute: Jerome sincerely cherishes the reconciliation of friends and refuses to hold a stone in one hand while offering bread with the other.²⁶⁴ Erasmus managed to exercise his baleful influence owing to “an eloquence sufficiently suited to his purpose” and a popularly acclaimed intelligence that scholars, however, did not recognize. He was “a goose among swans,” insinuating himself among “the Catholic leadership of our faith” with his penchant for interpretation and emendation (*tamquam interpres, et emendator*). Applying the proverb *anser inter olores* to Erasmus was tantamount to calling him an unintelligible fool. In the *Adages* (I.vii.22), Erasmus associated the saying, taken from Virgil’s *Eclogues* (9.36), with another proverb, *graculus inter musas* or “a jackdaw among the muses,” which means “an uneducated person among the best scholars, a completely tongue-tied person among the most eloquent.” The proverb refers to those who make a spectacle of their counterfeit learning and wantonly bawl at intelligent men. Thus, “whenever an

²⁶¹ Ibid., 7: A2r.

²⁶² *Opera divi Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Antwerp, 1578-1579), 4: *2v; 7: *2r.

²⁶³ This preface appears in *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3 vols. (Rome: Paulus Manutius, 1564-1565), 1: the folio that precedes a1r.

²⁶⁴ CSEL 55: 107.

uneducated person babbles among scholars, it will be the right time to apply the adage, ‘a goose among swans’.”²⁶⁵

In Erasmus intellectual incompetence combined with heresy and impiety. Vittori reports: “His heresies, uncovered by us in many places, even others before us have recognized, and they attacked [them] to such an extent that he lives in exile, already cast out from the company of Catholics.” The Italian editor is convinced that his edition shows how much Erasmus sinned in restoring the ancient Fathers of the Church, how much he misinterpreted them, and how deceptive he was in recounting historical and other matters. In the three volumes of Jerome’s letters, which Vittori has published with accuracy, Erasmus’ ignorance, carelessness, impiety, and hatred for the Church “will be revealed in a clearer light to the entire world.” Vittori restored more than 1500 passages (*loca*) in Jerome’s letters. In part, Erasmus defiled these “with his own hand;” in part, they were corrupted over time, and because of his ignorance he was unable to restore them.

In this enterprise, Vittori compared “with much toil” twenty manuscripts, supplied by Cassinese monks in Florence and Brescia and Dominicans in Naples and Bologna, against the Erasmian volumes. Some of these manuscripts predated printed editions. To these Vittori added manuscripts preserved in the Vatican’s “most abundant library.” In restoring Jerome’s texts, Vittori followed the judgment of the illustrious Cardinal Sirleto, who was extremely familiar with Erasmus’ “cunning and ignorance, especially of Greek literature,” from the passages in the New Testament that Erasmus had corrupted. At the end of preface, Vittori fondly mentions Cardinal Morone, to whom readers ought to attribute in large part the utility of the new edition of Jerome’s letters. He wanted the monks under his patronage to compare manuscripts with Erasmus’ edition. Once collated, Morone handed them over to Vittori for him to study so that he might complete his work in the comfort of his home.

Vittori understood the utility of his edition in editorial and confessional terms. The task of restoring and commenting on Jerome was not simply necessary in itself. It was also the product of the desire to rival Erasmus’ edition. The “enormous advantage to the Church,” moreover, encouraged Vittori and renewed his strength when faced

²⁶⁵ ASD II-2: 146, 148.

with the daunting task of editing. He observed how unfortunate persons, who had boasted of their German teachers or who under this pretext had departed from and opposed the Roman Church, finally realized “both the ignorance and stupidity” of their leaders and took their salvation more seriously, especially when they were able to learn from St. Jerome what they ought to believe and reject, “as we pointed out in the relevant places after refuting the heresies of Erasmus.” Vittori was determined to refute those who claimed that the Roman Church was interested only in the destruction, not the restoration, of books. He wanted to demonstrate that the Roman Church was the only true Church, that when it barred the faithful from reading Erasmus it did so with complete justification, and that it was just as capable of restoring the books of the holy Fathers as the heretics were proficient in corrupting and deliberately misinterpreting them. Foreseeing this necessity, Pius IV summoned to Rome Paolo Manuzio, whose excellent type was universally famous and revealed his learning and diligence, to print and publish “with great discernment” corrected patristic editions. In addition, at the pope’s bidding, Vittori could rely on the patronage of Cardinal Marcantonio Amulio, Bishop of his native Rieti. He asks Pius to receive “this so holy and, moreover, useful work,” so as to welcome Jerome cheerfully back to Rome, to send him forth among all the churches, and to show the entire world how much he values the unusual holiness and learning of Jerome, who, while he was alive, put the same at the service of the Roman Church.

The abbreviated preface in the Antwerp edition dilutes Vittori’s original antagonism against Erasmus.²⁶⁶ He is no longer linked to the heretics who masquerade as Catholics. He administered poison but did not throw any stones. Presumably, Molanus deleted the sentences that explain how Erasmus, the goose among swans, attracted support and that affirm how this heretic was exiled from the Catholic Church. To be sure, Erasmus sinned in restoring the Church Fathers, but that was as far as Molanus would go. He omitted the comment about Erasmian deception. The Antwerp edition does allow Vittori to point out that he exposed “the errors and lapses in knowledge” in Erasmus’ *scholia* and to align himself with Cardinal Sirleto’s opinion without,

²⁶⁶ For the abbreviated preface, see *Opera divi Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Antwerp, 1578-1579), 1: †2r-†2v.

however, mentioning what that opinion was or upon what it was based. Gone too are references to the teachers from Germany, the refutation of Erasmus' heresies, and the Church's prohibition of his works. In the original preface, Vittori repudiated Erasmus' *argumenta* as useless and false and protested against Erasmus' false account of Jerome's life. Not surprisingly, the abbreviated preface failed to reprint these accusations of Erasmian falsehood.

Like Erasmus, Vittori knew how to accumulate editorial credit. His professed loyalty to the papacy and to the Catholic Church and his association with three cardinals ought to ensure the success of his edition in Catholic Europe. Attacking Erasmus was crucial since Vittori had to supplant him as the authoritative editor of Jerome. In a letter of 8 March 1570, Vittori noted that "my St. Jerome," no doubt his *opera omnia* edition, was in press. He boasted to his friend the canon Pietro Cappelletti that this would be a "praiseworthy and immortal work," equating the difference between it and previous editions with the difference between heaven and earth. He considered the edition "as a work that is completely mine," one that did not "depend on anyone else except for me."²⁶⁷ Vittori may have despised Erasmus, but, like his deceased rival, pride in his editorial accomplishment prompted him to claim ownership over *his* Jerome.

Cornelius Schulting (d. 1604), a theologian at Cologne, hailed Vittori's edition as not only the most recent edition of Jerome but also "by far the most correct and most elegant of all." These words of praise appeared in a letter to the pious and learned reader of Schulting's massive compilation of passages from Jerome, the *Confessio Hieronymiana*, printed in Cologne in 1585.²⁶⁸ Schulting undoubtedly culled these passages from Vittori. Like Vittori, he dedicated his book to a pope—Gregory XIII—and he adapted the Italian editor's appeal to Pius IV to accept his edition of Jerome's letters. He

²⁶⁷ The letter appears in Sacchetti Sassetti, *La vita e gli scritti di Mariano Vittori*, 85: "Il mio S. Hieronymo si stampa, un foglio el dì, e ben corretto, e sarà opra [sic] degna, et immortale, e sarà tanta differenza fra li mei e quei di prima, quanto è fra il celo, e la terra. A questo dunque attenderò come opra [sic] ch'è tutta mia, nè pende da altri che da me."

²⁶⁸ *Confessio Hieronymiana*, ed. Cornelius Schulting (Cologne: Birckmann, 1585), α6r. On Schulting, see *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 56 vols. (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1875-1912), 32: 701, s. v. "Schulting: Cornelius," by Johann Friedrich von Schulte.

bade Gregory to receive “this useful and pious *Confessio* of the Hieronymian or Catholic faith;” cheerfully to embrace Jerome, returning from Bethlehem to Rome, “trampling upon Luther, Calvin and other heretics, and asserting most resolutely the authority and strength of the Roman see;” to send forth the *Confessio* to all the churches; and to show how much he values the unusual holiness and learning of Jerome which he, while alive, put to the service of the Roman Church.²⁶⁹

Schulting drew inspiration from the *Confessio Augustiniana* compiled by Jerónimo de Torres and the *Confessio Ambrosiana* compiled by Johann Nopelius.²⁷⁰ The former patristic collection first appeared in Dillingen in 1567, and Torres produced a revised edition in 1569. The latter collection was printed in Cologne in 1580. Torres belonged to the first contingent of Jesuit faculty that started to teach at the University of Dillingen in 1563. The next year he professed his solemn vows before Peter Canisius.²⁷¹ Nopelius and Schulting adopted the structure of the *Confessio Augustiniana* with minor modifications.

The objective of these patristic compilations was a confessional one. They aimed at proving the antiquity of Catholic belief and worship against Protestant innovation. Schulting spent four years preparing the *Confessio Hieronymiana* and published it for “the common benefit of the Church,” so that by reading Jerome heretics might return to “the bosom of the Catholic Church” and Catholics might acquire strength and resolve. Lutherans and Calvinists, not Erasmus, constituted Schulting’s main target, although he accused Erasmus along with the Lutheran Magdeburg Centuriators for criticizing Jerome’s view of marriage.²⁷² Schulting looked forward to the publication of more patristic anthologies or *Confessiones* to oppose “the most untruthful confessional statements of the heretics,” to refute Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* with greater firmness,

²⁶⁹ *Confessio Hieronymiana*, α4r.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, α2r.

²⁷¹ Thomas Specht, *Geschichte der ehemaligen Universität Dillingen (1549-1804) und der mit ihr verbundenen Lehr- und Erziehungsanstalten* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1902), 58; PCE 4: 929. On Torres, see *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús: biográfico-temático*, ed. Charles E. O’Neill, Joaquín Ma. Domínguez, 4 vols. (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu; Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2001), s.v. “Torres [Torrensis], Jerónimo de,” 4: 3822.

²⁷² *Confessio Hieronymiana*, γ3v.

and to expose more openly the deceptions perpetrated by the Centuriators in corrupting Church history and the holy Fathers.²⁷³

Conclusion

In 1528, Erasmus related the amusing story of the quest to identify his errors in a Dominican priory. The prior distributed Erasmus' publications among his confrères. One of these received Erasmus' edition of Jerome. But since he was equally ignorant of the ancient author and his famous editor, he proceeded to write down anything that caused offence, whether it came from Jerome or from Erasmus' *scholia*. He gathered a great many errors from Jerome. When it was time for each researcher to report his findings to the community of friars, the one who worked on the edition of Jerome looked forward to resounding kudos for having collected more erroneous articles than anyone else. Ridicule, however, took the place of praise when a more perceptive Dominican realized that his confrère had failed to make a distinction between Jerome and Erasmus.²⁷⁴ Given Erasmus' claims to ownership of Jerome's writings, the story of the clueless Dominican has a certain irony to it. The friar unwittingly acknowledged the contrived interchangeability of editor and author.

Whether revered as a "venerable brother" or reviled as a heretic, Erasmus dominated the sixteenth century as the most influential editor of Jerome. Even before 1516, educated Europeans looked forward to Erasmus' patristic edition, their expectations largely fuelled by Erasmus himself, who energetically promoted *his* Jerome. The authorized reiteration of the edition, unauthorized reprints in Cologne and Lyon, acknowledged and unacknowledged borrowings from Erasmus' commentary, and the manifest anti-Erasmian hostility in the confessionalized reconstruction of Jerome in the second half of the sixteenth century all point to at least one fact: Erasmus' edition became the indispensable starting point for reading Jerome. Erasmus was the editor of and authority on Jerome to applaud or to correct and vanquish. One either admired and embraced Jerome clad in the garb of Erasmian commentary, a Jerome owned by Erasmus and at

²⁷³ Ibid., α4r.

²⁷⁴ Allen 7: 482, ep. 2045.

some level indistinguishable from him, or one divested him of Erasmian error and reattired him in the vestments of Catholic orthodoxy. As the succeeding chapters will make clearer, at stake was a theological transmission and reception of the Church Father. Erasmus' edition asserted his theological credentials for restoring Jerome. His Catholic opponents rejected these without denying the theological import of the edition, however harmful in their eyes it was. Neither Erasmus nor his critics could conceive of an editorial approach that divorced philology from theology, secular from sacred learning. Humanist rhetorical theology wove together the common editorial fabric, a fabric that Erasmus did not single-handedly create but to which he impressively contributed, a fabric forged, at least in print, in the second half of the fifteenth century.

Surprisingly, no chorus of protest arose to challenge Erasmus' claim to have resuscitated Jerome. His Jerome was not *primum aeditus*. Credit for initially transmitting Jerome's collected letters through the medium of print goes to Teodoro de' Lelli and Sextus Riessinger. The ensuing chapters will show how the editorial tradition inaugurated by Lelli affected Erasmus. For the present, it is clear that Erasmus was neither the first nor the last to manipulate print to commend the printed Jerome and his editor, even if Erasmus promoted his edition and himself more energetically than all other competitors for public attention. In the *editio princeps* of Jerome's letters, the tribute to Lelli and the editor's preface single out his merits and contribution to editing Jerome. Separated by almost a century, Bussi and Vittori lend support to Kevin Dunn's observation that "self-authorization has always been part of the prefatory project."²⁷⁵ Brielis, Bussi's contemporary who seems to have edited Jerome's letters independently of Lelli's method, was less interested in referring to himself, even though he was just as determined for his edition to make its mark. Erasmus toyed with the idea of a papal dedication, and, even though he dedicated his Jerome to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the 1516 edition was protected by a papal privilege. Yet before Erasmus, the *editio princeps* and Bussi's edition went out under papal banners; the same was the case with Vittori's Jerome and the *Confessio Hieronymiana* after Erasmus. Eight years prior to Erasmus' famous first edition the

²⁷⁵ Kevin Dunn, *The Rhetoric of Authorship in the Renaissance Preface* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 19.

title page of the edition printed by Le Preux advertised the hard work and care that guaranteed the edition's accuracy. That the printed Jerome was an ally of humanism was already evident in the selections of letters edited by Aesticampianus and Lang and the one printed in Antwerp in 1515. This necessarily comprehensive, but by no means exhaustive, bibliographic record of Renaissance printed editions of Jerome demonstrates that Erasmus was a part, albeit a vital part, of a larger culture of printing and editing Jerome.

CHAPTER TWO

CLASSIFYING JEROME

Order Before Print

Setting in order or classifying the individual components of an author's collected oeuvre is an essential task for any editor. Erasmus' own taxonomy of his publications inspired the classificatory system of Jean Leclerc's early eighteenth-century edition of Erasmus' *opera omnia* as well as the Amsterdam modern critical edition, whose volumes began appearing in print as of 1969. More than a millennium before Erasmus, Jerome also published a list of his writings in the last entry in his catalogue of Christian writers. In the *De viris illustribus*, Jerome showed that he was his own editor. He points out that he has written:

the *Life of Paul*, the monk; one book of letters to various persons; an exhortation to Heliodorus; the *Dispute between a Luciferian and an orthodox Christian*; a *Chronicle of Universal History*; twenty-eight homilies by Origen on Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which I translated from Greek into Latin; *On the Seraphim* and *On the Hosanna*, *On the Honest and Prodigal Sons*, on three questions of the old Law; two homilies on the Song of Songs; *Against Helvidius on the Perpetual Virginity of Mary*; to Eustochium on the preservation of virginity; one book of letters to Marcella; a consolation for Paula on the death of her daughter; commentaries on Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, three books; on the Epistle to Titus, one book; on the Epistle to Philemon, one book; commentaries on Ecclesiastes; *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, one book; *On Places*, one book; *Hebrew Names*, one book; *On the Holy Spirit* by Didymus, which I translated into Latin, one book; thirty-nine homilies on Luke; seven treatises on the Psalms, from Psalms 10 to 16; the *Captive Monk*; the *Life of Blessed Hilarion*. I translated the New Testament out of Greek and the Old Testament out of Hebrew. I am not sure, however, of the number of letters to Paula and Eustochium, since they write daily. Furthermore I have written two books of explanations on Micah; on Zephaniah, one book; on Nahum, one book; on Habakkuk, two books; on Haggai, one book;

and much else on the writings of the prophets that I now have in hand and that has not yet been completed.¹

An unsophisticated reading might see this list as a disordered jumble, but Pierre Nantin has argued that it exists within a chronological framework. The list covers four periods of Jerome's life until 393, the year that Nantin believes that Jerome composed the *De viris illustribus*. (Other scholars argue for 392.) Within each period Jerome mentions his works according to genres. As genres Nantin identifies "treatises" and "others," such as homilies, hagiography, and letters. Above all, Jerome's list represents a form of self-promotion; it reflects the image of himself that he wanted to present to a public audience of culturally refined Christians.² Furthermore, inasmuch as his catalogue of Christian writers ends with his own publications, he, as Alfons Fürst observed, "styled himself as the summit of Christian literary production."³

Jerome presents himself as a translator, exegete, controversialist, correspondent, and biographer of exemplars of Christian asceticism (Paul, Malchus the captive monk, and Hilarion). He forgets to credit Origen with the homilies on the Song of Songs; Jerome simply translated them. For various reasons he neglected to list some of his other writings.⁴ Of course, he continued to publish after 393. He may have completed the *Adversus Jovinianum* (393), his longest polemic best known for its assertion of the moral and spiritual superiority of virginity to marriage, shortly after the *De viris illustribus*. Erasmus' edition of the list of Jerome's writings adds at the end: "*Against Jovinian*, two books. And the apology to Pammachius and the epitaph."⁵ The apology refers to the defence of the *Adversus Jovinianum* (ep. 49 perhaps combined with ep. 48), the epitaph to the eulogy of Nepotian addressed to Heliodorus (ep. 60). Erasmus' reading of the end of Jerome's catalogue is attested as early as the eighth century and appears in most incunabular editions of Jerome's letters. This addi-

¹ Ernest Cushing Richardson, ed., *Hieronymus, liber de viris inlustribus; Gennadius, liber de viris inlustribus* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1896), 55-56.

² Pierre Nantin, "La liste des oeuvres de Jérôme dans le '*De viris inlustribus*,'" *Orpheus*, n.s., 5 (1984): 319-34, esp. 326, 334.

³ Alfons Fürst, *Hieronymus: Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2003), 62.

⁴ Nantin, "La liste des oeuvres de Jérôme," 326-34.

⁵ *Opera* (1516), 1: 137v.

tion, Alfred Feder argued, did not come from Jerome but one of his contemporaries.⁶

Jerome clearly conceived of his letters in aggregate, collected into books, or as separate publications, especially in the case of his longer letters that functioned as treatises, such as the famous missive to Eustochium on safeguarding virginity (ep. 22).⁷ These epistolary treatises also comprise the exhortation to Heliodorus (ep. 14), the letters to Pope Damasus on the seraphim (ep. 18A) and on the acclamation *hosanna* (ep. 20), and the consolation for Paula on the death of Blesilla her daughter (ep. 39). When he specifically mentions the genre of letters, he classifies these according to their audience—*ad diversos*, to Marcella, to Paula, and Eustochium.

Teodoro de' Lelli favoured a thematic classification of the letters and began the preface to his edition, the first to appear in print, by contrasting the state of Jerome's letters in manuscript collections with his approach. Editorial chaos reigned before Lelli:

We maintain that the letters of Blessed Jerome, vital for Christian scholarship (*eruditio christiana*), were jumbled together in their variety of contents and subject matter and transcribed without any order. For each person had copied them out just as chance had turned them up or as they liked, and indeed, as occasionally amid dogmatic books and epistolary commentaries written about faith or against heretics, letters are interspersed—sometimes they are funereal, sometimes consolatory in nature, or they address either moral matters or the virtues—that have nothing in common with the preceding ones.

Realizing that a “suitable classification” (*acommodata partitio*) would benefit readers, Lelli decided to group together letters on the basis of specific subject matter and to divide them by considerations or approaches (*tractatibus*). For this undertaking he cited the authority of Plato, who knew “how much light and grace a distinction, suitably and opportunely applied, would bring to learning,” and thus “he perfectly distinguished everything not only for clarity but also for ease.” Thus, Lelli organized “all of the letters and treatises with the exception of the longer scriptural commentaries”—texts that did not appear in manuscript or printed editions of Jerome's letters—within

⁶ Alfred Feder, *Studien zum Schriftstellerkatalog des heiligen Hieronymus* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1927), 114, 118, 123.

⁷ Evaristo Arns, *La technique du livre d'après Saint Jérôme* (Paris: Boccard, 1953), 99–101.

a broad threefold schema that he further divided into books or tractates (*tractatus*). He began with texts “by which the Catholic faith is strengthened and defended from the assault of heresies, conscious that these are the very foundations of Christian teaching upon which health (or salvation—*salus*) and life depend.” Second came “dogmatic books” dealing with questions relating to both the Old and New Testaments or “expositions of the Sacred Scriptures by which the religious mind receives instruction in the law of the Lord.” Finally, the editor included “various treatises on morals and virtues by which the Christian way of life is laid out relative to each class, gender, or stage of life.” Lelli’s taxonomy is obviously theological and also deliberately pedagogical: “Thus the first books educate (*erudiunt*) the Christian in the faith. The second (*mediū*) provide instruction (*instruunt*) about the Sacred Scriptures and their commentators. The last train (*instituunt*) every class, gender, and stage of life with holy habits (*sacris disciplinis*).”

The advertisement of order in the preface, elaborated in the ensuing table of contents, is the chief selling point of the printed edition. The opening sentences of the preface relegate previous transcriptions to oblivion. Print triumphs over manuscript, order over chaos. The editorial self-promotion was not entirely accurate, however. To be sure, many manuscripts prove Lelli’s point. They suggest a lack of an orderly editorial vision, not surprising given the limited guidance one can glean from the way in which the Church Father lists his publications. Yet other medieval collections point to editorial principles that Lelli did not encounter, recognize, or acknowledge.

In the third book of his *Hieronymianus*, Giovanni d’Andrea presents a digest of Jerome’s writings. After the *incipit* and *explicit* of every text, he provides a brief commentary. The organization of texts falls into four sections. The first deals with the Christian faith. Here Andrea places *The Definition of the Faith according to the Creed of the Council of Nicaea*, the *Exposition of the Faith to Pope Damasus*, an *Exposition of the Creed* addressed to Pope Lawrence, a *Treatise on the Faith, Credulity, and Christian Way of Life*, and another treatise *On the Essence of the Trinity*.⁸

⁸ *Hieronymianus* ([Cologne: Konrad Winters], 1482), e1v-e3v. For the place of publication and printer, see GW 1727 and Ferdinand Geldner, *Die deutschen Inkunabeldrucker: Ein Handbuch der deutschen Buchdrucker des XV. Jahrhunderts nach Druckorten*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1968-1970), 1: 94, who identifies the *Hieronymianus* as Winters’ last dated printed book.

All five texts are spurious. Lelli includes all five in the first *tractatus* of the first part of his edition, although not in this order, and he adds other texts as well. Andrea organized the remaining three sections of the *Hieronymianus* under the headings *ad*, *contra*, and *supra*, that is, letters addressed *to* correspondents, polemics *against* adversaries, and commentaries *on* books of the Bible. The texts are arranged in alphabetical order according to addressee, adversary, and biblical book.⁹

Some anthologies of letters show that medieval editors were capable of thematic taxonomies. In the second half of the tenth century, monks from a monastery in Metz produced a collection of “the letters of Saint Jerome, priest, against Jovinian” at the request of Bishop Abraham of Freising for the use of the cathedral church of St. Mary and St. Corbinianus.¹⁰ Bishop Abraham might have intended the book made for him as a justification of the excellence of virginity. It contained the two books of Jerome’s polemic against Jovinian, as well as two letters addressed to Pammachius, Jerome’s friend. The first of these letters (ep. 48) to be copied in the collection is identified as a preface to the longer second letter (ep. 49) in which Jerome defends his positions on virginity and marriage in the *Adversus Jovinianum*. An eleventh-century codex contains the above texts in the same order and concludes with the polemic against Helvidius. Between the lengthy apology addressed to Pammachius and the *Adversus Helvidium* appears Jerome’s translation of the letter of Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis to Bishop John of Jerusalem, in which Epiphanius defends his ordination of Jerome’s brother to the priesthood within John’s territory and orders John to abandon the heresy of Origen (ep. 51).¹¹ From the inclusion of this letter it seems that the combat against heresy, not the pre-eminence of virginity, is the unifying theme of the collection in which it appears.

For some of the more extensive collections of letters an editorial tradition emerged by the tenth century and endured into the fifteenth. Jerome’s letters seem to have been arranged into five sections: (1) correspondence with Pope Damasus, (2) correspondence with Augustine, (3) missives addressed to various male correspondents,

⁹ *Hieronymianus*, e3v-o2r.

¹⁰ BSB, Clm. 6313, 1v, 2r; *Katalog der lateinischen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München: Die Pergamenthandschriften aus dem Domkapitel Freising*, vol. 1, Clm 6201–6316, ed. Günther Glauche (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), 195.

¹¹ BAV, Vat. lat. 371.

most of them clerics or monks, (4) letters to women, (5) funereal letters, also known as epitaphs, in which Jerome consoled correspondents after the death of a loved one. One collection at the Vatican Library (Vat. lat. 355-356), produced in the ninth or tenth centuries and annotated by Lorenzo Valla, may be the oldest instance of the five-part schema.¹² Coeval with this *epistolarium* is a tenth-century manuscript preserved in Paris at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Lat. 1871, Microfilm 947). These two *epistolaria* are the first surviving members of a family of manuscripts, “particularly attested in twelfth-century English manuscripts.”¹³ At the British Library, at least two twelfth-century manuscripts (Royal 6.C.XI, Royal 6.D.I) belong to the tradition. Other examples include one fourteenth-century codex (Kk.2.14) and two fifteenth-century codices (Kk.4.16, DD.II.7) at the Cambridge University Library, and a manuscript completed in Florence in 1464 (MS 932) at Yale University’s Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Among these manuscripts, the order of texts with scant exceptions is identical. Other epistolary collections approximate the order in one way or another. The *epistolarium* that Heinrich Neithart purchased in Siena in 1423, kept at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich (Clm 21214), interrupts the usual arrangement by interspersing four letters addressed to women and one epitaph within the third section and two epitaphs in the fourth section. Otherwise it adheres to the five-part classification.

A closer look is in order. Vat. lat. 355-356 is as good a starting place as any other member of the tradition. This collection, preserved in two folio volumes, and all the others mentioned above open with the same letter from Damasus (ep. 35). Accepting Jerome’s offer of devoting some of his nocturnal scholarship to his wishes, Damasus raises five “little questions” relating to interpreting passages from Genesis that his correspondent should answer.¹⁴ Jerome’s reply (ep. 36) is divided into three separate texts. Although the table of contents begins by identifying this communication between Damasus and Jerome, another very brief letter by Damasus (ep. 19), requesting an

¹² Sebastiano Gentile, ed., *Umanesimo e Padri della Chiesa: Manoscritti e incunaboli di testi patristici da Francesco Petrarca al primo Cinquecento* ([Rome]: Rose, 1997), 252, 254.

¹³ Pierre Lardet, “Épistolaires médiévaux de S. Jérôme: jalons pour un classement,” *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 28 (1981): 279.

¹⁴ CSEL 54: 265-67.

explanation of the meaning of the Hebrew word *hosanna*, has crept in to interrupt the exchange. In only one of the manuscripts that I consulted, the fifteenth-century Cambridge UL Kk.4.16, was this letter more sensibly placed before Jerome's treatment of the exclamation (ep. 20). The other manuscripts did not include it at all. Jerome's preface to his translation of Origen's two homilies on the Song of Songs as well as the translation itself follow ep. 36. It made sense for the medieval editor to append the letter to Tranquillinus (ep. 62) on "how he ought to read Origen," which expressed Jerome's "judicious" opinion that one should not on account of Origen's learning take on his erroneous teachings or on account of his errors reject his "helpful commentaries on the Sacred Scriptures."¹⁵ Inserting the letter to Tranquillinus thus justified the inclusion of the translation of Origen's homilies.

Five texts complete the first, Damasian, section. The first two (epp. 15, 16) are Jerome's first two letters to Damasus, written some five years before his return to Rome in 382 and his first meeting with the pope. From his Syrian solitude he asks for a decision on which of three contenders for the see of Antioch that he should accept as legitimate. The next two texts combined represent an early "essay in exegesis" in which Jerome expounds Isaiah's vision of God and of the two seraphim (Isaiah 6: 1-9) and which "takes the form of a letter" to Damasus, yet "the structure and contents make it clear that what we have is not in fact a letter but two short pieces" (epp. 18A, 18B) that were later addressed to Damasus when "Jerome was in Rome and was submitting specimens of his exegesis to the pope."¹⁶ In Vat. lat. 355-356 and several other manuscripts, the order is reversed: epp. 18B, 18A. Cambridge UL Kk.4.16 is an exception. Its arrangement (epp. 18A, 18B) coincides with the decision of the modern critical editor of Jerome's letters, Isidore Hilberg. The final text in the medieval dossier of Jerome's correspondence with Damasus is another scriptural commentary, this time on the parable of the prodigal son (ep. 21).

According to Peter Brown, Augustine's "long drawn out correspondence with Jerome...is a unique document in the Early Church. For it shows two highly-civilized men conducting with studied cour-

¹⁵ J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975), 213; CSEL 54: 584.

¹⁶ Kelly, *Jerome*, 78.

tesy, a singularly rancorous correspondence.”¹⁷ Fürst attributes their sparring to Jerome’s inability to separate intellectual criticism of ideas and personal hostility, whereas Augustine was able to reconcile criticism with friendship and with respect for persons.¹⁸ Their disagreements touched on “essential questions of how Christians deal with the Bible.”¹⁹ Was the Septuagint sufficiently authoritative or should one turn to the *Hebraica veritas* when translating the Old Testament? When Paul “opposed Peter to his face” (Galatians 2: 11) over the question of adherence to Jewish ceremonial law, was he merely dissembling within a simulated dispute, as Jerome argued in order to uphold the consensus of the apostles, or, as Augustine insisted to preserve the veracity of Scripture, did Paul actually reproach Peter in a genuine disagreement?²⁰ Jerome and Augustine remained in contact until the end of the former’s life. Neither vanquished the other in their controversies, and eventually they both fought on the same side against Pelagius, settling “into an uneasy, never intimate, but still functional epistolary relationship.”²¹

The second section of Vat. lat. 355-356 begins with Augustine’s third letter to Jerome (ep. 101). Nine other letters from the emerging controversy appear in this chronologically imperfect order: epp. 102, 103, 111, 110, 56, 105, 67, 104, 112.²² The fifth installment of the second section omits a considerable part of the opening of one of Augustine’s letters (ep. 110). Some manuscripts in the classificatory tradition under review followed suit; others reproduced the letter from its *incipit*.²³ Ep. 111 is Augustine’s request to Praesidius to serve

¹⁷ Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 274.

¹⁸ Alfons Fürst, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1999), 145-50, 157-66, 232-35.

¹⁹ Ralph Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal. 2, 11-14* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 12.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 189-217, 249-64. Fürst, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus*, 1-87, deals with the interpretation of Galatians 2: 11-14 in great detail but devotes only a few pages (139-45) to the problem of translating the Old Testament.

²¹ James J. O’Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 93.

²² For the chronology of the epistolary controversy between 394 or 395 and 405, see Fürst, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus*, 92-110, esp. 108, where in a table Fürst constructs the chronological order of the surviving letters as epp. 56, 103, 67, 101, 102, 105, 104, 112, 110, 111, 115, 116.

²³ In the first category: BNF, Lat. 1871; in the second: Beinecke MS 932.

as an intermediary in the dispute with Jerome. After the conclusion of the controversy, readers move on to Jerome's letter (ep. 126) to two other African correspondents, Marcellinus and his wife Anapsychia, that recalls their question about the origin of the soul and refers them to Augustine, who can teach them on this point.²⁴ Yet, in the following text, Augustine's letter to Jerome on the "origin of the soul" (ep. 131), the African bishop confesses himself unequal to the task. Then (ep. 132) Augustine asks Jerome's opinion about the meaning of James 2: 10: "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it" (RSV). Jerome acknowledges receipt of Augustine's most learned and eloquent missives but is not in a position to answer them (ep. 134).²⁵ The next three letters are all by Jerome (epp. 141, 142, 143); the third one commending Augustine and his friend Alypius for having cut the throat of the heresy of Caelestius, a zealous disciple of Pelagius and "the *enfant terrible* of the movement" of rigorous Christian perfection inspired by his master.²⁶ Two spurious works complete the second section: an explanation of the faith intended for Alypius and Augustine and a dialogue with Augustine on the origin of the soul (*Disputatio de ratione anime*).

The third section resists any principle of overarching cohesion. It simply consists of *epistolae ad diversos*, coinciding with the first classification of letters in the *De viris illustribus*. Yet logical groupings of texts manifest themselves. The section opens with a pair of letters: Jerome's youthful admonition to his friend Heliodorus to forsake the world and join him in the desert to live a monk's life (ep. 14) and "an affectionate, polished essay, decked with classical quotations and allusions setting out...the austere pattern of the priest-monk" (ep. 52).²⁷ The latter, written in 394, about twenty years after the preceding letter, he sent to Nepotian, the nephew of Heliodorus, who had in the meantime become Bishop of Altinum and had ordained Nepotian a priest.²⁸ At the beginning of the letter, Jerome recalled that he had written to Heliodorus while still a young man, restraining the "initial assaults of a licentious age through the harshness of the

²⁴ CSEL 56/1: 143-44.

²⁵ CSEL 56/1: 261.

²⁶ CSEL 56/1: 292-93; Brown, *Augustine*, 343.

²⁷ Kelly, *Jerome*, 190-91.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 190.

desert.”²⁹ Erasmus, on the authority of Jerome, believed the letters should appear together.³⁰

Another pair of letters follows the first. They are both addressed to Paulinus of Nola and contemporary with the letter to Nepotian. In our manuscript tradition, they appear in reverse chronological order. The first (ep. 58) is linked thematically by title with the preceding letter to Nepotian and then connected to the other letter to Paulinus (ep. 53). Readers consulting the table of contents of Vat. lat. 355-356 encounter the following sequence: (1) *Ad nepotianum Hieronimus de uita clericorum & monachorum*, (2) *Ad paulinum de institutio clericorum uel de diuina scriptura*, (3) *Item ad paulinum de omnibus diuine historie libris*. A letter on the life of clerics and monks leads to one on the clerical way of life or on sacred Scripture, which in turn leads to a discussion of all the books of Scripture. Towards the end of ep. 58, Jerome asks Paulinus briefly to pay attention to the path he should take through Scripture.³¹ In ep. 53, “after an extended survey of the books of the Old and New Testaments designed to illustrate their difficulties, Jerome urges Paulinus to live with them and to meditate on them.”³²

Two letters to the priest Amandus, which modern scholarship considers as one (ep. 55), follow the letters to Paulinus and precede a series of five letters addressed to Pammachius and Oceanus, both individually and together, including the spurious missive to Oceanus on the life of clerics (epp. 57, 83, 84, 69). This series leads to a sequence of four letters addressed to correspondents identified as priests, two to Evangelus (epp. 146, 73), one each to Mark (ep. 17) and Avitus (ep. 124). After several texts whose associations are not obvious, among them the spurious exposition of the Nicene Creed and the essay on the three virtues of fortitude, wisdom and prudence, we encounter a group of polemical writings: Jerome’s treatise against Helvidius in defence of Mary’s virginity, a contemptuous refutation of the accusation of being an Origenist directed against Vigilantius (ep. 61), a letter to Riparius in which he repudiates the Vigilantius’ attack on “the relics of the holy martyrs” as an intolerable “sacrilege”

²⁹ CSEL 54: 414.

³⁰ CWE 3: 39, ep. 308.

³¹ CSEL 54: 538.

³² Kelly, *Jerome*, 192.

(ep. 109),³³ the treatise against Vigilantius in defence of the cult of the saints, and an apology for the Christian use of pagan learning addressed to Flavius Magnus, “official professor of rhetoric in Rome,” who wondered why Jerome in his works had sometimes employed “examples from secular literature” and besmirched the “Church’s purity with pagan filth” (ep. 70).³⁴

Thereupon follows a concatenation of sensible groupings. A pair of exegetical essays (epp. 74, 72) on questions relating to King Solomon intended for the priests Rufinus (not Jerome’s adversary Rufinus of Aquileia) and Vitalis leads to a pair of letters to Florentius (epp. 4, 5) that in turn moves on to a third pair, addressed to Abigaus (ep. 76) and Castrutius (ep. 68), both blind men whom Jerome consoles on account of their disability. The table of contents of Vat. lat. 355-356 then lists a series of four letters to deacons—to Sabinianus (ep. 147), Julian of Aquileia (ep. 6), Niceas a sub-deacon (ep. 8) and Laurentius. But the letter to Laurentius is nowhere to be found in the codex. This curious feature is evident in other similarly arranged *epistolaria*.³⁵ Neither the genuine nor the counterfeit Jerome corresponded with the phantom deacon. From deacons we proceed to monks with letters to Rusticus (ep. 125), Paul of Concordia (ep. 10), Chromatius, Jovinus, and Eusebius (ep. 7), Chrysogonus (ep. 9), Anthony (ep. 12), Theodosius and his fellow anchorites (ep. 2), and Minervius and Alexander (ep. 119). Vat. lat. 355-356 misidentifies Paul of Concordia as a monk. Even if the table of contents of this manuscript and of those with the same order of texts does not identify as monks the priest (and later bishop) Chromatius of Aquileia, his brother Eusebius, a deacon, and their friend the archdeacon Jovinus, frequently listed in the manuscripts as Jovinian, we know that Chromatius turned his home into a “veritable monastery” in which his brother, friend, mother, and sisters joined him in the ascetic life.³⁶ The third section ends with the two letters to Pammachius (epp. 48, 49) in defence of the *Adversus Jovinianum*, a letter to Pammachius and Marcella in which Jerome maintains his strident

³³ CSEL 55: 352, 354.

³⁴ Kelly, *Jerome*, 213; CSEL 54: 700.

³⁵ See, for example, BNF, Lat. 1871 (Microfilm 947); Cambridge UL, Kk. 2. 14, DD. II. 7; British Library, Royal Ms. 6. C. XI, Royal Ms. 6. D. I.

³⁶ Ferdinand Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme: sa vie et son oeuvre*, 2 vols. (Louvain: “Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense” Bureaux, and Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion [et] Édouard Champion, 1922), 1: 20.

stand against the errors of Origen (ep. 97), and Jerome's remonstrance against a critic of the attack on Jovinian in a letter to Domnio (ep. 50).

The well-known epistolary treatise on the safeguarding of virginity addressed to Eustochium (ep. 22) opens the series of letters to women. These letters discuss a variety of topics. To refer to only some of the texts in the fourth section, in the letter to Asella (ep. 45), Jerome complains of his opponents in Rome who criticized his efforts to recruit women for the cause of asceticism; he instructs Laeta how to raise her daughter Paula (ep. 107) and Furia how to sustain her commitment to widowhood (ep. 54); he answers the exegetical queries of Hedibia (ep. 120) and Algasia (ep. 121). After these last two letters, Vat. lat. 355-356, perhaps taking a cue from the book of letters to Marcella that Jerome mentions in the *De viris illustribus*, adds fifteen letters for which it identifies in its table of contents Marcella as the recipient. In one case, the manuscript and several other medieval *epistolaria* are in error, mistaking a letter to Paula (ep. 30), the widowed mother of Eustochium, for one to her ascetic guide, the older widow Marcella. The correspondence with Marcella lacks a letter that Jerome wrote in the name of Paula and Eustochium (ep. 46). Jerome's first two letters to Marcella consoling her on the death of her friend Lea and praising her fellow ascetic Asella (epp. 23, 24) appear in the concluding section of the manuscript.

This final section, consisting of twelve texts, begins with Jerome's epitaph for Nepotian sent to Heliodorus (ep. 60). It includes the spurious consolatory letter to Tyrasius on the death of his daughter, now attributed to Caelestius,³⁷ an "exhortation" to Julian, a wealthy man in Dalmatia bereft of his wife and two daughters (ep. 118), as well as the earliest of Jerome's letters, the story, addressed to Innocent, of a woman wrongly accused of adultery who survived seven blows from two sword-wielding executioners (ep. 1), crafted "for the one purpose of glorifying the faith of a woman who is characterized as a martyr."³⁸ The letter seems out of place in a dossier of more mature letters in which Jerome laments the death of friends, such as Paula (ep. 108) and Marcella (ep. 127), and consoles friends and other correspondents because of the loss of loved ones, such as the

³⁷ BHM 3A: 156, no. 340. The letter has also been misattributed to Cyprian. For a critical edition, see CSEL 3/3: 274-82.

³⁸ Stefan Rebenich, *Jerome* (London: Routledge, 2002), 63.

letter to Pammachius on the death of his wife Paulina (ep. 66), the last letter of the *epistolarium*.

The classification that we have reviewed emphasizes Jerome in relationship with others. The relationships are hierarchically structured: correspondence with Pope Damasus, with Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo, with various men, including priests, deacons, and monks, and finally with women. At the end, Jerome confronts death, the termination of earthly relationships. Of course, the final section is thematic in its organization, and in the *epistolae ad diversos* a thematic approach exits alongside the principle of grouping letters together on the basis of the identity or common estate of correspondents, even if the latter dominates.

The tradition of classifying Jerome's letters along these lines influenced the volume printed by Johannes Mentelin in Strassburg no later than 1469. We can discern the same categories of correspondence but with additions as well as interruptions that introduce elements of classificatory confusion. Correspondence with Damasus initiates the incunable. The first two letters constitute a spurious exchange between Damasus and Jerome. The third (ep. 35) is the first in the manuscript tradition with the ensuing texts following the traditional arrangement with the exception of the insertion of two spurious expositions of the creed. Damasus' request for an explanation of *hosanna* (ep. 19) precedes Jerome's answer. The correspondence with Augustine largely resembles the arrangement outlined above but for three differences. The book that Mentelin printed added the closing exchange in the controversy between Jerome and Augustine (epp. 115, 116), omitted a brief letter from Jerome (ep. 142), and inserted between the letter to Marcellinus and Anapsychia (ep. 126) and Augustine's letter on the origin of the soul (ep. 131) missives to Pammachius (ep. 49), Marcella (ep. 40), Niceas (ep. 8) and a spurious short treatise on the duty of children to obey their parents. The last-mentioned three genuine letters reappear later in the volume in more appropriate places. The inclusion of three letters to Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria (epp. 82, 63, 86) as well of a spurious treatment of the unity of the Church and the redeployment of the epitaph on Nepotian (ep. 60)—all in immediate succession—constitute the principal departure from the usual arrangement of the *epistolae ad diversos*. This section ends not with the letter to Domnio, which appears much earlier, but with an excerpt from the preface,

addressed to Eusebius of Cremona, to Jerome's *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* and a letter (ep. 106) to two Goths, Sunnia and Fretela, "one of the most precious sources for the study of the Latin psalter."³⁹ The correspondence with women begins with the famous letter to Eustochium (ep. 22). It contains seven letters more than Vat. lat. 355-356, including two letters wrongly attributed to Jerome and the consolation on the death of Lea (ep. 23) and the commendation of Asella (ep. 24), which have been united with the other letters to Marcella. The order of texts in the incunabular edition differs from the manuscripts and succumbs to a few interruptions. The consolatory letters to Tyrasius and to Julian of Dalmatia (ep. 118), for example, are out of place here, separated from the series of letters of the same genre at the end of the book. Yet it does not end with the consolation for Pammachius, which precedes the celebration of the innocent woman (ep. 1), but with two polemics, one against the teachings of Pelagius addressed to Ctesiphon (ep. 133), the other an attack on Rufinus for his loyalty to Origen, the third book, appended in 402, to a larger apology completed one year earlier.⁴⁰

At least two fifteenth-century manuscripts, directly or indirectly related to each other, demonstrate a conspicuously deliberate classification of Jerome's letters. For one of these, belonging to the Vatican Library (Vat. lat. 348), we know the name of the scribe and the date of completion. Giacomo Macario (Iacobus de Machariis), a native of Venice who between 1449 and 1463 plied his trade there and in Florence, Siena, and perhaps Cesena,⁴¹ praised God after completing in Florence the transcription of Jerome's "pleasant writings" on 17 September 1449.⁴² The second codex, also a product of Florence, where it forms part of the collection of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana (Plut. XIX, Cod. 11), betrays no precise year of completion. It is the first of what must have been a two-volume project whose companion either has gone missing or was never completed. We cannot identify by name the person who copied out Jerome's correspondence, but we know that Nastagio Vespucci (1426-1482), father of the explorer Amerigo, wrote out the table of

³⁹ Kelly, *Jerome*, 286.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 314-15 (ep. 133), 251-56 (*Apology against Rufinus*).

⁴¹ Albert Derolez, *Codicologie des manuscrits en écriture humanistique sur parchemin*, 2 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984), 1: 140, no. 167.

⁴² BAV, Vat. lat. 348, 450r.

contents.⁴³ The prefatory notes introducing the tables of contents reveal the relationship between the manuscripts. Macario's preface is either an abbreviated version of the one in Plut. XIX, Cod. 11, or the preface in the latter is an elaboration of Macario's. The preface of Vat. lat. 348 reads:

The table of St. Jerome's letters: it contains all the letters, written to various people, that expound and assert the orthodox faith and refute heretics; letters (*item*), dictated to sundry saints and friends, that expound and explain the Sacred Scriptures and resolve various questions; letters (*item*), intended for many people, that lay down the principles of Christian life and provide a sketch of proper moral conduct; letters (*item*), addressed to various friends, on forming and maintaining friendships; letters (*item*), sent to different persons, that offer consolation on the death of loved ones and for sicknesses and other troubles of various kinds. Also included are some of his short treatises (*breues libelli*) meant for specific persons that many have traditionally placed among his letters, and for that reason someone thought it appropriate to fit them in according to the classification outlined above. At the very end appear some of his sermons.

This schema arranges Jerome's letters and epistolary treatises into five genres (dogmatic, exegetical, spiritual and moral, letters on friendship, consolatory) and includes an appendix of sermons. The wording in Macario's manuscript coincides almost exactly with the other preface in Plut. XIX, Cod. 11, which instead of introducing each of the five distinctions with *item* explicitly enumerates them: *prima [pars]*, *secunda pars*, *tertia*, *quarta*, *quinta et ultima*. The references to the appropriately inserted *libelli* and the appended sermons are identical. The preface to the table of contents in the undated manuscript opens: "Here begins the table of St. Jerome's letters divided into five parts in accordance with the five main topics so that the reader may find more easily what he seeks." After affirming that the short treatises had been suitably incorporated into the classificatory structure, the preface notes that some of the letters, owing to their variety of topics, could have been included in more than one of the parts, but each will have its own place in the table, which will proceed according to the principal categories of analysis. Then the pref-

⁴³ A. C. de la Mare and Lotte Hellinga, "The First Book Printed in Oxford: The *Expositio Symboli* of Rufinus," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 7/2 (1978): 224, n. 11.

ace mentions the appended sermons. The final sentence suggests a two-volume enterprise: “And everything is divided into two parts.”

Confining ourselves to the Vat. lat. 348, the surviving complete collection, we observe that the first three genres coincide exactly with the three principal divisions of Lelli’s classification. Even the first text in the manuscript is the same as the first text of the *editio princeps*: the *Expositio symboli* intended for an unknown Pope Lawrence (Laurentius). This explanation of the creed, wrongly attributed to Jerome, was the work of Rufinus of Aquileia, Jerome’s rival in the Origenist controversy.

Formal classificatory divisions appear neither in the table of contents nor elsewhere in the manuscript. Nevertheless, it is clear that the texts have been arranged in accordance with the taxonomy established in the prefatory note, even if its principles have not been consistently applied. Jerome’s involvement in the late fourth- and early fifth-century controversy over Origen’s teachings dominate the first class of letters. After the *Expositio symboli* and two other spurious texts—a treatise on Christian faith and another on the Trinity—readers encounter Rufinus’ preface to his translation into Latin of Origen’s *First Principles*, a letter to Pope Anastasius I (399-401) in defence of his orthodoxy, the two books of his *Apology against Jerome*, the three books of Jerome’s rejoinder with the third book followed by the first and second, Jerome’s brief letter to Rufinus on the eve of their quarrel (ep. 81), and his letter to Pammachius and Marcella “against his detractors and the followers of Origen,” to quote from the title in the manuscript (ep. 97). The manuscript misidentifies the letter to Domnio (ep. 50) as having Rufinus as its target, when Jerome in fact took offence at an unnamed monk, who had criticized the *Adversus Jovinianum*. The next letter is Jerome’s first to Rufinus (ep. 3). Written in 374, a generation before they crossed swords over Origen, the letter reveals “expressions of tender intimacy,” uncharacteristic of an older, angrier Jerome and out of place in the category of Jerome as doctor and defender of the faith.⁴⁴ The manuscript wrongly attributes to Rufinus the note to Pammachius (ep. 49) in the wake of the attack on Jovinian. It appropriately includes the letter to Marcella in which Jerome differentiates Catholicism and Montanism (ep. 41), but his defence, also addressed to Marcella, against the

⁴⁴ Kelly, *Jerome*, 45.

charge that he corrected the text of the Gospels (ep. 27), accuses no one of heresy. Four letters (epp. 63, 86, 88, 99) to Theophilus of Alexandria, a convert to the anti-Origenist party, are relevant to earlier texts in the first section. This section concludes with the dialogue directed against the schismatic Luciferians and with excerpts from Jerome's anti-Pelagian treatise. The manuscript does not contain the polemics against Helvidius and Vigilantius, two eminent candidates for a collection of texts in Hieronymian dogmatic and controversial theology.

The second class of letters begins with the spurious exchange between Damasus and Jerome on the Psalms. Augustine's lament over the shattered friendship between Jerome and Rufinus (ep. 110) would be more at home in the first section; his letter challenging Jerome's interpretation of the confrontation of Paul and Peter in Galatians 2 can easily be classified within the exegetical genre (ep. 116). But an earlier letter from Jerome to Augustine (ep. 103) does not at all fit under the exegetical rubric. Letters to Marcella on various scriptural questions make up the bulk of the second section.

Jerome's letter to Abigaus (ep. 76), uncoupled from that to Castrutius (ep. 68), which appears among the consolatory letters, initiates the letters of moral and spiritual advice. The commendation of Asella addressed to Marcella and the eulogy of Marcella addressed to Principia (epp. 24, 127) also appear in the third, instead of the fifth, category of letters, which fittingly includes Jerome's call for the deacon Sabinianus to repent of his sexual sins (ep. 147) and the letter to Celantia (ep. 148) on the way to lead an upright life (*de modo recte uiuendi*). Jerome's advice for Eustochium on safeguarding virginity (ep. 22) was not incorporated into the manuscript, unlike the spurious rule for monastic life addressed to Eustochium and other virgins. A series of early letters (epp. 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 9, 7, 2, 12, 11), beginning with the two to Florentius, written from Jerome's sojourn in the desert, bring to light "the warmth of his affections, his passionate desire to be loved, his prickly readiness to take offence, his rapid switches from bitter self-reproach to self-righteous indignation, his intense dislike of being alone" and aptly constitute a section on friendship.⁴⁵ Pseudo-Jerome is the author of most of the consolatory texts, but the genuine Jerome emerges in the letter that consoles

⁴⁵ Kelly, *Jerome*, 51.

Castrutius (ep. 68) and those that lament the passing of Nebridius (ep. 79), Lea (ep. 23), and Paula (ep. 108).

More than a century ago, Germain Morin disputed the assumption that all sermons attributed to Jerome are spurious. Three of the nine texts identified as sermons by Jerome in Vat. lat. 348 belong to his authentic homiletic works: a sermon on Epiphany, another on Lent, and a third for the Easter Vigil.⁴⁶ Forming a second appendix, unmentioned in the note preceding the table of contents, Jerome's *De viris illustribus* as well as the apocryphal *Liber de infantia salvatoris*, a narrative of Jesus' childhood belonging to a small group of manuscripts copied in Florence,⁴⁷ complete the manuscript.

Macario's transcription with its classification by genre, whether or not it was unprecedented, signals a departure from the editorial tradition established no later than the tenth century. Jerome is not simply a writer of letters, whose correspondence is organized along the lines of a Christian social hierarchy. The taxonomy of Vat. lat. 348 emphasizes the authoritative voice of the correspondent, of Jerome the assertively orthodox theologian, the consummate exegete, the spiritual director in life's various circumstances, including its adversities, the promoter of friendship, and even the preacher. In this way, the Florentine manuscript, on the eve of the advent of print, anticipated the editorial reconstruction of Jerome's epistolary oeuvre spearheaded by Lelli and reiterated and adapted into the seventeenth century until Jean Martianay boasted in the fourth volume (1706) of his five-volume edition of Jerome (1693-1706) that he was the first to publish the Church Father's letters in chronological order.⁴⁸

Taxonomies in Print

Lelli devised a taxonomy that analyzed in great detail Jerome's contributions to doctrine, exegesis, and practical advice for Christian living. He divided the first part into four sections. Jerome expounds the faith, attacks heresies and defends himself against the accusations

⁴⁶ Germain Morin, "Les monuments de la prédication de saint Jérôme," *Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuses* 1 (1896): 393-434. For the three genuine sermons, see BAV, Vat. lat. 348, 391v-395v and CCSL 78: 530-41.

⁴⁷ *Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum*, vol. 9, *Libri de nativitate Mariae: Pseudo-Matthaei evangelium*, ed. Jan Gijssels (Brepols: Tournhout, 1997), 261-62.

⁴⁸ *Sancti Hieronymi opera*, 5 vols. (Paris: Louis Roulland, 1693-1706), 4: i3r.

of heretics, confronts in particular the “destructive errors of Origen,” and discusses the origin of the soul. Unlike Vat. lat. 348, Lelli does not explicitly attribute the exposition of the creed, addressed to the elusive Pope Lawrence, to Jerome. The title lacks an author’s name. Bussi’s second edition of Jerome (1470), but not the first (1468), clearly indicates the authorship of Rufinus. The second part consists of six *tractatus*, groupings of texts that answer questions about (1) the Old Testament and (2) the New Testament, (3) expound certain psalms and translate and comment on Origen’s homilies on the Song of Songs, (4) constitute sermons suitable for some feasts, (5) address the names of places in Hebrew and interpret Hebrew words, and (6) discuss Greek writers, various Latin translators, and the best way of translating. The first volume could not contain all the second part. After producing the first two sections, it ends with Pierpaolo Vergerio’s eighth oration in praise of Jerome. The final four sections of the second part appear, of course, in the second volume, which is dominated by the fourteen sections or books of the third part. The following topics organize the reader’s approach to Jerome: (1) virtues and vices, (2) the education of children, (3) the life of the clergy and the distinctions among them, (4) the correction of the life of prelates and their conduct, the condition (*status*) and chastity (*continentia*) of (5) virgins, (6) married people, and (7) widows, (8) the contempt of the world, contemplative life, and praise of the desert, (9) the life, condition, and rule of monks, (10) friendship, appropriate for all walks of life, (11) false friends and detractors, (12) consolation for friends in time of adversity, (13) funereal letters and epitaphs on the dead in which Jerome praises them and comforts those who survive them, and (14) exhortations to penance and the reproof of sinners.

The proliferation of distinctions comes as no surprise when we remember that Lelli was a jurist. His justification for placing a section on friendship after those on the various social stations because it is suitable to all of them reveals a drive for logical sequencing. In the third part, the second section contains only two texts, the third four texts, and the fourth two texts again. Lelli must have felt the need to subsume all of Jerome’s letters under some category.

In the case of the section on prelates, Lelli supplemented the spurious letter to Bishop Rusticus of Narbonne, perhaps identical with

the Rusticus to whom Jerome wrote on the monastic life (ep. 125),⁴⁹ with the much longer “treatise of Blessed Augustine on pastors,” a genuine sermon on pastoral care, in which, as Lelli points out in his *argumentum*, the African Church Father differentiates between true and false pastors.⁵⁰ Would a section on prelates have been embarrassingly lean with only the letter to Rusticus? Did the section, which Pierre Lardet calls “unusual,”⁵¹ represent how seriously Lelli took his own office as bishop as well as a belief in episcopal reform? He begins the *argumentum* to the letter to Rusticus by observing that Jerome “teaches a bishop to pursue humility, justice, and peace assiduously, to take pity on the poor, to study and teach God’s law, to refrain from accepting a person’s testimony or from judging anyone in an unexamined cause, to avoid looking down on lower-ranking ministers of the Church and inflicting harm on them.” Jerome distinguishes seven ranks of clergymen, and he shows with what sort of respect and charity a bishop should treat and cherish all of them. He also “censures the pride and avarice of bishops who, by claiming all privileges for themselves and heaping up wealth for themselves, force the clergy to go begging.”

Perfection in finding the proper place for Jerome’s letters eluded Lelli, however, and he must have known it. Three cross-references send readers to other places in the edition to observe thematic continuity between two texts assigned to different categories. For example, Lelli put Jerome’s letter (ep. 13) seeking reconciliation with his aunt, Castorina, in the first *tractatus* of the third part. After this letter, the editor referred readers to the spurious treatise on Christian belief and behaviour, which “I have placed in the first part among the letters on faith,” for more precepts relevant to the instruction of Christian conduct. Of course, it would be superfluous to produce the same text in more than one location, although this is what happens with Jerome’s warning to Marcella against the Montanists (ep. 41), which inaugurates the second section of the first part and reappears in the subsequent section. Indeed, this letter is out of place in the comprehensive dossier on the Origenist controversy, as are the

⁴⁹ Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 212.

⁵⁰ Augustine, Sermon 46, CCSL 41: 528-70.

⁵¹ CCSL 79: 200*. Lardet mistakenly refers to the third, not the fourth, section of the third part. It is clear that he means the fourth *tractatus* since he mentions Augustine’s *De pastoribus*.

manifestations (epp. 48-50) of Jerome's unrepentant *parti pris* in the wake of the *Adversus Jovinianum*, his defence of a bishop who had married a second time after the death of his first wife whom he married before baptism (ep. 69), his esteem for Augustine and Alypius for their role in crushing the heresy of Caelestius (ep. 143), and two other letters to Augustine touching on heretics (epp. 141, 142), but not specifically on fifth-century enthusiasts for Origen's ideas.

Lelli's elaborate taxonomy dominated the enterprise of printing Jerome's collected letters even beyond the incunabular era, including the editions printed in France, namely the Parisian edition of 1512 and the three Lyonnais editions of 1508, 1513, and 1518. The edition printed by Jacques Saccon in 1518 points to the survival of the Lellian order two years after Erasmus' Jerome appeared in print, even if it represented the last Latin edition with this order and borrowed from the Erasmian edition. *Les Epistres monseigneur saint Hierosme en françois* (1520) was the last edition to adopt the classification established some 50 years earlier. The collection printed in Italian translation in Ferrara in 1497 borrowed from Lelli's *argumenta* but paid no heed to his order. The anthology of Johannes Rhagius Aesticampianus, printed in 1508, with its letters of direction in human affairs—*ad vitam mortalium instituendam*—seemed, however, to emphasize the third of Lelli's main categories. The same may be said for the selection first printed by Jacob Thanner in 1514 and the one edited by Heinrich Stackmann and printed by Johannes Rhau-Grunenberg that reproduced Aesticampianus' title.

Juan de Molina's Castilian translation printed by Joan Joffre in 1520 follows an order reminiscent of Lelli's classification. Divided into seven books, the anthology arranged Jerome's letters in terms of their relevance to different estates. The first of these was common to all. It represented the "common doctrine," and thus Book 1 contained letters relevant to "the foundations of our holy Catholic faith." The references to doctrine and faith recall the first of Lelli's three parts. Only two of the ten letters in Book 1 appeared in Lelli's *pars prima*, however: the letters to Ctesiphon (ep. 133) and to Pammachius and Oceanus (ep. 84). Lelli would not have seen any dogmatic value in the letters to Celantia (ep. 148), Rusticus the monk (ep. 125), Castorina (ep. 13), Marcella on the death of Lea (ep. 23) and in the spurious letters to a relapsed sinner, and on the honour due to parents, the keeping of vigils, and the three moral virtues. The remain-

ing books of the *Epistolae de S. Hieronymo* pertain to clerics, monks, virgins, widows, married people, and to the “consolatory estate,” also known as the letters of consolation. These estates correspond to six specific topics in Lelli’s third part.⁵²

The Lellian presentation of Jerome underwent slight modifications, already evident in Bussi’s 1468 edition. One minor change occurred in the collection of Jerome’s various polemical pieces. Lelli brought together in the second section of the first part the polemics against Jovinian, Helvidius, and Vigilantius, the letters to Riparius (ep. 109) and Ctesiphon (ep. 133), the *Dialogue against the Pelagians*, and the *Dialogue against the Luciferians*. In his corresponding section, Bussi included the same texts, but in a different order: the polemics against Jovinian, Vigilantius, the Luciferians, Helvidius, the letters to Riparius and Ctesiphon, and the *Dialogue against the Pelagians*. More conspicuously, Bussi appended at the end of his edition under the heading *Sequentes epistole non subsunt ordini premissis* a miscellany of texts that “do not come under the classification established above.” Most of these twenty-two *epistolae*, if one counts the prologue to the *Life of Hilarion* as well as the *Life* itself as one text as Bussi does not, did not appear in the *editio princeps*. Many of these were in fact *spuria* that may not have figured prominently in manuscript collections of Jerome’s letters, but some, omitted by Lelli, were no strangers to manuscript *epistolaria*, such as two letters to Augustine (epp. 103, 134) and the letter to Abigaus (ep. 68). Bussi moved to the miscellany the *vitae* of Malchus and Hilarion as well as the *De viris illustribus* from the places to which Lelli had assigned them. Bussi’s changes to Lelli’s system became more or less standard in other incunabular editions, except for the one printed in Venice in 1476. While other editions added Bussi’s miscellany, they restored the *De viris illustribus* and the *vitae* of Malchus and Hilarion to their original Lellian places (Parma, 1480; Venice, 1488; Venice, 1490; Nürnberg, 1495). In the edition printed by Nicolaus Kesler in 1497, the homeless gathering of texts formed the fifteenth *tractatus* of the third part—*de diversis*, a self-proclaimed miscellany.

In 1468, in the preface to his edition, Bussi in Rome acknowledged the established or reliable order (*certus ordo*) devised by the

⁵² *Epistolae de S. Hieronymo* (Valencia: Juan Joffre, 1520), + iiii recto—++ vi recto (table of contents).

“most learned and best father Teodoro, Bishop of Trevisio,”⁵³ but did Adrian Brielis, further afield in Mainz, know of Lelli and his handiwork by 1470? If he did, he must have preferred his own taxonomy, but perhaps he worked unaware of his Italian counterparts. His “pleasant classification” did not attract the interest of other editors or printers in the long history of publishing Jerome’s letters. The Benedictine monk apportioned Jerome’s correspondence among twelve “distinctions,” but without Lelli’s three overarching categories of understanding Jerome that lend coherence to their more specific components. Brielis’ distinctions recall editorial strategies of arrangement evident before print as well as in the volume printed by Mentelin, Peter Schoeffer’s competitor in Strassburg. They mix correspondence with persons and thematic arrangements. Brielis labels the first and fifth distinctions, respectively, *epistole damasiane* and *epistole augustiniane*. In line with a long established tradition, the first two installments of the correspondence with Damasus comprise the request for interpretations of passages from Genesis and Jerome’s compliance (epp. 35, 36). Between the correspondence with Damasus and Augustine come letters (2) expounding the orthodox faith and promising victory to those who adhere to it in the face of persecution, (3) relating to Origen and his champion Rufinus, and (4) refuting a great number of heretics and Jerome’s critics. That the second distinction begins with two letters from Jerome to Damasus and one *vice versa* quickly exposes Brielis’ system as an imperfect one. Other letters (6) suggest ways of correcting one’s life, (7) answer various questions, (8) encourage bearing with troubles and physical ailments, (9) repair and renew friendships, and (10) provide instructions on various subjects to correspondents who can no longer be identified by name. After the eleventh category, sermons for specific feasts attributed in many manuscripts to Jerome, Brielis puts letters written for devout women in last place.

Erasmian Order: Innovation and Tradition

Putting Jerome into order was one of the Herculean labours that Erasmus identified in his essay on the adage of the same name. Vari-

⁵³ Giovanni Andrea Bussi, *Prefazioni delle edizioni di Sweynheym e Pannartz prototipografi Romani*, ed. Massimo Miglio (Milan: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1978), 3-4.

ous other editors had turned order into confusion in different ways. Erasmus' classificatory efforts vexed him greatly. Alas, a talent for taxonomy garners no respect. Erasmus will not, but of course he does, mention anything of the difficulty involved in detecting the learned, unlearned and puerile, or even insane texts mixed in with Jerome's writings, but falsely ascribed to him, and in giving the excluded works their own place.⁵⁴ He was wrong to complain, however, that no one would notice his gift for order.

In 1517, two French humanists acknowledged the value of Erasmus' classification of Jerome's writings. Writing from Paris, Germain de Brie included "the works of Jerome restored and set in order" among various publications by Erasmus that earned "from all lovers of humane letters in these parts," a warm welcome and an "enthusiastic and affectionate reception."⁵⁵ Also in Paris, Guillaume Budé remarked to Bishop Cuthbert Tunstall of London:

...when I read what he has published on the New Covenant, the instrument of true religion and piety, and what he has done for St Jerome's works (on whose interpretations almost alone rests our understanding of the divine law), with his immense labours of elucidation and explanation, of setting in order and renewing and virtually resurrecting, then I feel how fortunate is this age of ours, and our successors, to have that sacred body of doctrine, the source of our rule of living and of dying, rightly and duly ordered and indeed restored to us.⁵⁶

Erasmus asked Budé for a copy of this epistolary *encomium* so that he could include it in a new collection of his correspondence, the *Auctarium selectarum aliquot epistolarum Erasmi Roterodami ad eruditos, et horum ad illum* (1518).⁵⁷

An exchange of letters with Gregor Reisch in 1514 shows that putting Jerome's letters in order was part of Erasmus' editorial programme. He announces a tripartite arrangement for Jerome's letters:

In first place, we shall put what genuinely belongs to him; second, what is falsely attributed to Jerome but still worth reading. In third place, we shall also append the spurious works added by some most absurd

⁵⁴ ASD II-5: 40.

⁵⁵ CWE 4: 321, ep. 569.

⁵⁶ CWE 4: 358, ep. 583.

⁵⁷ Léon-E. Halkin, *Erasmus ex Erasmo: Érasme, éditeur de sa correspondance* (Aubel: P. M. Gason, 1983), 56.

and, moreover, utterly shameless good-for-nothing. Consequently, this will have a double effect: the reader will not be misled by deceptive attributions and nothing will be lacking for those who enjoy such nonsense.⁵⁸

For Erasmus the restoration of Jerome meant not only the emendation of corrupt passages but the separation of the genuine from the counterfeit. This classificatory principle represented a watershed in centuries of editing Jerome. Erasmus' "crucial innovation" was the determined effort to rescue Jerome from the accretion of *spuria*.⁵⁹ Here he acted like a typical scholar of the Renaissance, which saw not only "an efflorescence of pasts imagined" but also "the demolition of hundreds of earlier and contemporary forgeries." Renaissance humanists had every reason to be on their guard if, for example, as many as two-thirds of ecclesiastical documents produced by the end of the tenth century were forged.⁶⁰

The correspondence with Reisch, moreover, reveals a disagreement about how to order the genuine letters. Erasmus is happy that Reisch shares his enthusiasm for Jerome and does not disapprove of Reisch's system, but he could not follow it without causing himself much hard work. His own classification would, furthermore, perish. Erasmus must have also felt that Reisch was separating what belonged together: "there are many letters that in some other system would belong together; for example, Jerome himself requires that the pamphlet that he wrote for Nepotian should be combined with the pamphlet he wrote for Heliodorus." "We shall follow," he promises, "the old order except for the *spuria*, and, in place of the order that you devised, we shall put a table (*index*). This will result in a twofold order (*duplex ordo*) and a twofold convenience."⁶¹ The *duplex ordo* that Erasmus envisaged must have been based on the distinction between works correctly and incorrectly attributed to Jerome.

We can glean only the vaguest idea of what Reisch had in mind, namely that he objected to a haphazard conjoining of letters and

⁵⁸ Allen 2: 28, ep. 308.

⁵⁹ Eugene F. Rice, Jr., *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 125.

⁶⁰ Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 28, 24.

⁶¹ Allen 2: 28, ep. 308.

epistolary treatises. He approved of the plan to segregate the *spuria*, yet he did not like the rest of Erasmus' taxonomy:

If you alter my classification, or rather that of the dearly departed Amerbach senior, in the opinion of many people, you will cause a considerable loss for merchants, perhaps no less for readers. For, as you are aware, in other printed editions the letters are arranged in great disarray with books and treatises. Frequently I hear this sort of conglomeration and labelling criticized by people more learned than I am. Thus an entire book is counted as a letter, although it is not usually thought of or printed as such, and a small part or almost nothing of the order of themes is preserved.

Reisch hopes that the "prescribed order of parts" (*praescriptus partium ordo*) will remain, except that those letters should precede the books and treatises that require them. All falsely attributed works should follow.⁶² The *praescriptus ordo* might refer to the classification that Reisch or Amerbach had already devised, and that Reisch may have feared threatened by Erasmus' appeal to the *vetus ordo*, which Reisch may have equated with the classification of previously printed editions. Since Erasmus and Reisch never elaborated on the *vetus ordo* or the *praescriptus ordo*, the precise meaning of these terms remains a mystery.

What was traditional about Erasmus' classification? We cannot exclude the possibility that he followed more or less closely one or more manuscripts in the ordering of Jerome's texts. His choice to begin with Jerome's exhortation to Heliodorus (ep. 14) to join him in the desert and his discussion of the ideal priest and monk, intended for Nepotian (ep. 52), coincides with at least three twelfth-century manuscripts. Erasmus, like these manuscripts, continues with the epitaph on Nepotian (ep. 60) and the letter to Rusticus on the ideal monk (ep. 125). After opening with epp. 14, 52, 60, and 125, a "sufficiently comprehensible" unit according to Lardet, the manuscripts and Erasmus' edition part company.⁶³ His edition does not approximate the incunabular editions in the sequence of texts, but it demonstrates an affinity with Lelli's tripartite schema.

⁶² Allen 2: 29-30, ep. 309.

⁶³ BAV, Vat. lat. 360, Vat. lat. 361; Bibliothèque Mazarine (Paris), MS 577; Lardet, "Épistolaires médiévaux de S. Jérôme," 278.

The title pages of the 1516 edition classify Jerome's letters by genre, using Greek words. The first volume announced that it contained the *paraenetica*, that is, writings relevant to the proper ordering or conduct of life: *ad vitam recte instituendam*. What Erasmus means is, of course, as Mark Vessey renders the phrase, "the good instruction of a Christian life."⁶⁴ The purpose of the first volume recalls the aim of Aesticampianus' anthology: *ad vitam mortalium instituendam*. Erasmus used the same verb (*instituere*) as Lelli and Aesticampianus when it came to moral instruction. Erasmus devoted the third volume to the *elentica* and *apologetica*, works that refuted various heresies and the false charges (*calumniae*) of slanderers, and the fourth to the *exegetica*, "which serve the exposition of Sacred Scripture." Lardet observes: "At first blush, these three categories obviously recall the three parts of Lelli's classification, except that the order is reversed: morals, dogma, exegesis instead of dogma, exegesis, morals."⁶⁵

Lelli's preface reveals his editorial programme. Commenting that Jerome's letters were "vital for Christian scholarship," he proceeds to identify the chief editorial challenge and its solution. He seeks to create order out of chaos, and the table of contents that follows the preface reveals in detail how one may organize Jerome's letters according to his three main categories and various subcategories. Erasmus' much shorter introduction to his first table of contents also begins with a Christian reference: "To be sure, for it to become more obvious how much Christendom (*Christianus orbis*) owes Jerome, it is appropriate to include a table (*index*) of all that he has written, which we have arranged in five categories (*ordines*)." These were the genuine, the dubious, the pseudonymous, works that mingled passages from Jerome and other writers, lost works or works that have not yet come to light.⁶⁶ While Erasmus does not state his objective, it is clear that in the classification of Jerome's works his priority is to separate authentic writings from all others in the transmission of the Hieronymian corpus. For more than eleven folio pages in the 1516 edition the first table of contents reviews all nine volumes according to the

⁶⁴ Mark Vessey, "'Vera et Aeterna Monumenta': Jerome's Catalogue of Christian Writers and the Premises of Erasmian Humanism," in *Die Patristik in der frühen Neuzeit: Die Relektüre der Kirchenväter in den Wissenschaften des 15. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Günter Frank, Thomas Leinkauf, and Markus Wriedt (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann holtzboog, 2006), 357.

⁶⁵ CCSL 79: 222*.

⁶⁶ *Opera* (1516), 1: γ1r.

five categories. Then follow two other extensive systems of listing the contents of the edition: a table of contents of the individual volumes and an index of *incipits* in alphabetical order.

Outside these tables Erasmus comments on the broad categories that determine the contents of the volumes of letters. References to the categories are not confined to the title pages of the individual volumes. In the first volume, in the dedicatory letter to William Warham, Erasmus describes his editorial work on the letters: restoring correct readings, adding *argumenta* and *scholia*, detaching the *spuria*. He continues by noting that he divided the letters into four volumes:

In the first I have grouped together his pieces of moral instruction by exhortation and example, because what deals with the ordering of life deserves attention first. The second I have divided into three classes, into the first of which I have put certain things that show some degree of culture and are worth reading, but are falsely ascribed to Jerome; into the next, things which are not his, but carry an author's name in their headings; the third class is a kind of cesspool into which I have thrown the supremely worthless rubbish of some impostor... . The third volume I have allotted to his works of controversy and apologetics, those, that is, which are devoted to refuting the errors of heretics and the calumnies of his opponents. The fourth I have kept for the expository works, I mean the explanations of Holy Scripture.⁶⁷

In the preface to the fourth volume in the 1516 edition, Erasmus reviews his classification. He wanted to place the exegetical letters last since they correspond better with the "volumes that immediately follow," namely volumes 5 to 9, which contain the scriptural commentaries. "And in fact," continues Erasmus, "the method of classification (*ordinis ratio*) does not work out badly. The first [volume] provides instruction about (*instituit*) life and morals, and it is fitting that this is the first concern of all. Associated with this is the second [volume], owing to the affinity of topics; otherwise it should be relegated to the final class (*in extremam classem*). The third encompasses the defence of the faith, the fourth scholarship."⁶⁸

In the second edition, Erasmus took his own advice. He consigned the *spuria* to the last place (*in extremam classem*), to the fourth volume. The exegetical letters moved up to the third volume. In the revised preface to this volume, Erasmus qualifies its subject matter: scholar-

⁶⁷ CWE 3: 263-64, ep. 396; CWE 61: 11-12.

⁶⁸ *Opera* (1516), 4: lv.

ship (*eruditio*) becomes sacred scholarship (*sacra eruditio*). The editor elaborates on the *ordinis ratio* of the three volumes of genuine letters: “To live well befits everyone, while to fight for the faith is not the business of the fresh recruit, but of the seasoned soldier. Furthermore, to assume the part of the teacher (*doctor*) is the role of the sort of person who derives authority from the combination of moral integrity and extraordinary learning (*eruditio*).”⁶⁹

Erasmus supplements a concept of classification wedded to subject matter with an ascending hierarchy of Christian capacities and responsibilities. Jerome’s moral writings receive priority owing to the universal obligation to pursue virtue. The edition of his letters advances to the defence of orthodoxy, the province of more experienced Christians, and culminates in sacred knowledge or scriptural scholarship, suited to those who are both virtuous and erudite, who combine *pietas* and *doctrina*. Exegetical expertise grounded in an upright life represents the pinnacle of Christian authority. Those who reach this summit deserve the title of doctor. This presumably includes Erasmus, editor of the New Testament and “professor of sacred theology.” The dignity of the subject matter, not the disposition of Christian readers, determined Lelli’s priorities, however. Doctrine in its own right was most important of all. Whereas Erasmus would agree with Lelli that Jerome’s letters were essential for Christian erudition, he valued the exposition of Scripture more than the articulation and defence of doctrine. In any event, the dogmatic works that appeared in the first *tractatus* of the first part of the Lellian classification, such as the expositions of the creed and a treatise on the Trinity were not genuine and thus re-appeared in the Erasmian collection of *spuria*. Jerome elaborated his theology in polemics, not expository treatises.

Not only did Erasmus invert the Lellian categories; he dispensed with their subdivisions. In the preface to the *spuria*, he claims that he organized the contents of the first volume—the hortatory works and those writings relevant to rules of conduct—“in such order as was possible” (*quo licuit ordine*).⁷⁰ Writings, whose themes were praise, consolation, and reproof, along with narratives were all bundled

⁶⁹ *S. Hieronymi lucubrationes omnes*, 9 vols. (Basel: Johann Froben, 1524-1526), 3: aa2r; Allen 5: 472, ep. 1453.

⁷⁰ *Opera* (1516), 2: 2r. CWE 61: 67 misconstrues the passage to read “in random order.”

together, as it were. Interspersed among these were some of Jerome's familiar letters. Erasmus placed all of these into the same volume, "for Jerome himself combined these in such a way that they cannot be conveniently separated." Everywhere he pursued the same strategy. He enticed with flattery to make the bitter medicine of instruction more palatable. He consoled in order to teach, rebuked in order to improve, related events to bring to light the "image of piety," and conversed and even sometimes joked with friends to summon them to piety.⁷¹ Owing to his style, Jerome's letters resisted detailed categorization.

In the revised preface to volume 2 of the second edition, the idea of a sequence of texts replaces that of a bundle (*fascis*): "Whatever was relevant to the conduct of Christian life," Erasmus informs William Warham, "since this ought to be our first concern, we gathered together into the first volume, following a topical order so that, beginning with what is more perfect we gradually come to matters of lesser value (*inferiora*), then to the lapsed, and finally to the exemplary stories."⁷² The translation in CWE incorrectly identifies these *exempla* as "awful warnings,"⁷³ yet what Erasmus has in mind are the story of the woman struck seven times (ep. 1) and the *vitae* of Paul, Hilarion, and Malchus, texts that appear at the end of volume 1. These *exempla* are preceded by three letters addressed to lapsed persons and entitled in the table of contents for volume 1: (1) *Castigatio relapsi. Ad Rusticum*, (2) *Vitandum virgini suspectum contubernium*, and (3) *Obiurgatio Diaconi impudici. Ad Sabinianum*.⁷⁴ Jerome wove together "a garland of penance from the most beautiful flowers" of scriptural passages, exhorting the relapsed Rusticus in ep. 122—not Rusticus the monk of ep. 125—to honour his agreement with his wife to abstain from sexual intercourse and his promise to follow her to the holy places, and to do penance for violating their agreement.⁷⁵ Erasmus surmised that he "relapsed into sexual relations" owing to "domestic habit" and that Rusticus was not at all his name but the name Jerome used to protect his correspondent from a bad reputation.⁷⁶ Jerome urged a young woman and her mother, living sepa-

⁷¹ *Opera* (1516), 2: 2r.

⁷² Allen 5: 465, ep. 1451.

⁷³ CWE 10: 270, ep. 1451; CWE 61: 99.

⁷⁴ *Opera* (1516), 1: 81r-81v.

⁷⁵ CSEL 56/1: 69-70.

⁷⁶ *Opera* (1516), 1: 99r.

rately, to abandon the “suspect company” of male strangers—clerics in both cases—and live together in harmony (ep. 117). Sabinianus, the “shameless deacon,” as Erasmus refers to him in the title, did not want “to be raised up after his downfall.” Jerome reproached him for his sexual escapades: he attempted to woo away a nun from her monastery and then, after having obtained Jerome’s pardon, he committed adultery with the wife of a powerful barbarian (ep. 147).⁷⁷

It is more difficult to delineate the first two categories of the first volume. How does one distinguish between the *perfectiora* and the *inferiora*? An examination of the titles in the table of contents for the volume suggests that the gradual progress from the one to the other was a figment of Erasmus’ imagination. The first four letters have to do with asceticism and the clerical and monastic estate. The thirteenth letter, to Paulinus (ep. 58), is also on monasticism. But it is preceded by six letters whose common point of reference could be female chastity, letters, according to their titles in the tables of contents,⁷⁸ to Laeta on the education of girls, to Demetrias on preserving virginity, to Salvina and to Furia on remaining widows, to Ageruchia (a widow) on being married only once (*de monogamia*), and to Gaudentius also on the education of girls, (epp. 107, 130, 79, 54, 123, 128). The fifth and sixth letters of volume 1, to Florentius (epp. 4, 5), Erasmus describes as familiar letters, yet he does the same with those to Theophilus, Julian the deacon, Theodosius, Niceas, and Chrysogonus (epp. 99, 6, 2, 8, 9) much further down the list and approaching the letters to the lapsed.

The thematic groupings in the first volume point to a classificatory method, but some of these also come with gaps. A letter to Eustochium on the small gifts that she sent Jerome (ep. 31) precedes a letter to Marcella on the same subject (ep. 44). The consolatory letters to the two blind men, Abigaus and Castrutius (epp. 77, 68), appear together, ahead of the consolation meant for Julian (ep. 118), who, as Erasmus notes in his *argumentum*, “within a few days lost two daughters and his wife” and soon afterwards during a barbarian invasion lost “a considerable part of his possessions.”⁷⁹ The “summons to a pious life,” addressed to Lucinus (ep. 71), interrupts a

⁷⁷ CSEL 56/1: 313, 321-324, 327.

⁷⁸ *Opera* (1516), 1: γ1r, δ1r, δ4v, δ5v, δ6v.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 1: 93r.

series of funereal letters, but Erasmus probably saw it as a prelude to the epitaph on Lucinus that Jerome sent to his wife Theodora (ep. 75). Erasmus, however, does not create a sequence of letters that he designates as familiar; nor does he combine the letters to Laeta and Gaudentius. In the table of contents, the editor calls the famous letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) an “education of a holy virgin.” The title at the head of the letter introduces it as “on the safeguarding of virginity.”⁸⁰ The twenty-second letter in the volume, it is at a considerable remove from the letter to Demetrias on the preservation of virginity (ep. 130), which occupies seventh place.

Sound linkages co-exist with some puzzles in the volumes dedicated to Jerome’s controversies and exegetical letters. The defence of Mary’s perpetual virginity against Helvidius, which opens the volume of controversies, conveniently leads to the *Adversus Jovinianum*. Erasmus distinguishes between Jerome’s letters to Augustine on the struggle against heretics and the correspondence relating to their disagreements with each other. Whereas Lelli assembled a complete set of documents on Jerome’s place within the Origenist controversy, Erasmus did not construct a similar sequence of texts. Among texts written by and to Jerome on Origen’s legacy the sixteenth-century editor intersperses Jerome’s anti-Pelagian writings and an unrelated letter to Marcella (ep. 32). The volume contains Rufinus’ preface to his translation of Origen’s *On First Principles* and the three books of Jerome’s *Apology against Rufinus*, but Erasmus, unlike Lelli, did not include the two books of Rufinus’ invective against Jerome. These objects of his contempt he exiled to the second class of the volume of *spuria*. The volume of controversies concludes with two letters, to Pammachius and Marcella, in which Jerome defends his method of translation in general and his translation of the Scriptures in particular (epp. 57, 27).

Together these two letters represent a fitting transition to the next volume, which begins with the letter to Paulinus (ep. 53) “on the study of Sacred Scripture,” according to the title in the table of contents.⁸¹ The letter commonly served as a preface to medieval Bibles, and, appropriately, Erasmus follows suit with twenty biblical prefaces by Jerome. Some of the prefaces ascribed to Jerome in

⁸⁰ Ibid., 1: 62r.

⁸¹ Ibid., 1: 83r.

Bibles are not by him. Erasmus published more correct versions of the genuine prefaces along with explanatory *scholia*. He commented on the spurious prefaces without publishing them so as to exclude all foreign matter.⁸² The comments consist of three *censurae* and several philological annotations. The *censurae* on the prefaces to the Gospels of Mark and John explicitly convey Erasmus' opinion that Jerome did not write them; Erasmus implies the same in the *censura* on the preface to Luke when he maintains that everyone believes that it was translated out of Greek.⁸³ The remaining texts are by and large divided between those that expound Old Testament and New Testament passages. Three letters to Marcella, on the ten names of God and on the meanings of the Hebrew words *alleluia* and *selah* (epp. 25, 26, 28), separate the letters to Sophronius "on the order and titles of the Psalms,"⁸⁴ which served as the preface to Jerome's translation out of Hebrew of the Psalms, and to Sunnia and Fretela on the psalter (ep. 106) from expositions of Psalms 90, 45, 127 written for the priest Cyprian, Principia, and Marcella (epp. 140, 65, 34). Jerome's translation of Origen's two homilies on the Song of Songs interrupts a series of letters answering questions about the New Testament. Immediately after these homilies, Erasmus places a letter to the monks Minervius and Alexander explaining two Pauline passages (1 Corinthians 15: 51, 1 Thessalonians 4: 17) relevant to belief in the resurrection (ep. 119) and a brief reply to two exegetical questions posed by Paulinus that bear on the problem of free will and grace (ep. 85). In the table of the volume's contents, Erasmus incorrectly entitles the former an "exposition of a passage in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians."⁸⁵ Following the letter to Paulinus comes one to Desiderius, in which Jerome announces the completion of the *De viris illustribus* (ep. 47),⁸⁶ but it is not clear why what Erasmus describes as a "familiar letter,"⁸⁷ should appear in a volume of exegetical letters.

⁸² Ibid., 4: AAA1v.

⁸³ Ibid., 4: 13r.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 1: 83r.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 1: 83v. Erasmus did not correct the error in the fourth and final edition that he prepared. See *Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes*, 9 vols. (Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopus, 1536-1537), 1: ̢3v.

⁸⁶ CSEL 54: 346.

⁸⁷ *Opera* (1516), 1: 83v.

As with his editorial predecessors, Erasmus' taxonomy did not create a perfect system. He knew this. He writes in the revised preface to volume 2 that he added the catalogue of writers, that is the *De viris illustribus*, as an appendix to volume 1, a volume that was "slender enough," for he could not find a more suitable location anywhere else.⁸⁸ In the 1516 edition, the first volume seemingly ends with Jerome's *Life of Malchus*, as the notice *Primi tomi finis* at the end of the text indicates. A blank folio separates the story of the captive monk from the *De viris illustribus*, giving the latter work its appended status. Although, according to Erasmus, the *De viris illustribus* was a text that defied taxonomy and appeared where it did to fill out the first volume, its location was arguably appropriate. If we remember that the catalogue of Christian writers culminates in Jerome and appears at the end of a volume promoting Christian conduct, Vessey's observation makes sense: "The end of the beginning of Erasmus' great instauration" of Jerome "is marked by a text...in which Jerome's name stands like a terminus or *ne plus ultra* of Christian letters."⁸⁹

As he was preparing the volume of exegetical writings, its slimness prompted Erasmus, as he tells Warham in the revised preface to the second edition of the volume, to add at the end "the Hebrew traditions along with other pieces that are not letters at all."⁹⁰ Erasmus was well aware that he mingled the genuine *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, *Hebrew Places*, and *Hebrew Names* with the spurious *Hebrew Questions on the Books of Kings*, *Hebrew Questions on Chronicles*, and *Places in the Acts of the Apostles (Loca actorum)*. In his *censurae*, he rightly disputed Jerome's authorship of the last three works.⁹¹

An introductory note to the reader at the beginning of the second volume of the 1516 edition recapitulates its tripartite arrangement, the most detailed classification in any of the volumes. The first part contains learned writings incorrectly attributed to Jerome, the second "various works previously interspersed with Jerome's books, but nevertheless showing from their titles the identity of the authors" (and thus, as Eugene Rice remarked, "not properly spurious"⁹²), the third, in Erasmus' opinion, "several works not entirely worthy." The under-

⁸⁸ Allen 5: 465, ep. 1451.

⁸⁹ Vessey, "'Vera et Aeterna Monumenta,'" 375.

⁹⁰ Allen 5: 472, ep. 1453.

⁹¹ *Opera* (1516), 4: 104v, 122r, 149v.

⁹² Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 125.

statement, *non admodum digna*, shows uncharacteristic restraint for Erasmus from whom one might have expected *admodum indigna*, writings that were completely unworthy of Jerome. Try as he might, a “pious and learned reader” could not escape the fact that the works in the third class had up until now been “most shamefully” attributed to Jerome, Augustine, Cyril, and Eusebius (of Cremona). Those who disagree with Erasmus’ opinion have no cause for distress, for they have whatever was published in earlier editions with a few additions; moreover, the texts have been printed more elegantly and more correctly than ever before. Erasmus leaves each to his own opinion. Those who want what is more elegant are forewarned; those who prefer to be content with “the old flavour” have suffered no offence.⁹³ At the end of the second preface in the volume, Erasmus explains: “I was so careful not to offend anyone that I took pains to accommodate the learned and the unlearned alike, the reasonable and the unreasonable, the hopeless as well as those whose talents show promise.”⁹⁴

In the fourth volume of the second edition, Erasmus reconfigures the introduction to the *spuria* as a letter addressed to William Warham. Dated 10 October 1524, a month after the *De libero arbitrio diatribe*, his defence of the free will against Luther, appeared in print, the letter gives vent to Erasmus’ horror of intensifying religious dissent in the early years of the Reformation. Storms battered Christianity, scholarship was in turmoil, and floods of evil seemed to threaten the onset of Judgment Day. Within a short time the humanities had begun to flourish only to have triumphant barbarism destroy all subjects worthy of study. A new breed of swindlers, possessed of a smattering of Latin and less Greek, produced “outlandish pamphlets.” Was their “stupefying conceit” by which they scorned authors who had been unanimously revered for centuries more a product of ingratitude or impiety? These hacks (*rabulae*) would have us repudiate the works of the great authors and read their own “brawling dirges” instead. Was Erasmus thinking of scholastic theologians or anyone who entered the fray of theological polemics? Whatever the case may be, he was all the more happy to edit “our Jerome.” He had already appeared “most elegant”—a reference to Erasmus’ first edition—but

⁹³ *Opera* (1516), 2: 1v.

⁹⁴ CWE 61: 97.

now (with the second edition) he emerged “still more elegant.” The editor enhances the credit that was his due and justifies a new edition. Then he proceeds to underscore an obvious point: “In this volume, nothing except for the *censurae* belongs to me.” Even in the first edition, the title page of the *spuria* did not boast Erasmus’ name. Why should it? If what the volume contained was not his Jerome, why should he claim any ownership in it other than to expose in the *censurae* forgery after forgery? Yet, to return to the editor, he holds that works not by Jerome should not be shunned out of hand. The first *ordo* contains many things that deserve to be read, so much so that Erasmus, obviously exaggerating, might be happy to keep the attributions to Jerome! He tersely expresses his opinion about the third *ordo*: almost none of its contents are worth the time of “the pious and learned reader.” Those who value sound judgment have been warned; those who want nothing omitted have not been cheated.⁹⁵

What was innovative about Erasmus’ larger classification was his decision, made obvious in the first table of contents, to separate the genuine from the spurious. Thus Jerome himself becomes a principle of classification. Erasmus would agree with Michel Foucault: an author’s name “ensures a classificatory function,” for “such a name makes possible the gathering together of a certain number of texts, their demarcation, the exclusion of some texts from them, their opposition to other texts.”⁹⁶

Erasmus was not the first to read Jerome’s letters with a critical eye for authenticity. That the editor of an of an eighth-century manuscript, completed during the episcopate of Bishop Arbeo of Freising (764-784), expressly declared that “we do not doubt that Jerome wrote this letter,” namely the letter to Paulinus “on the canon,” is a sign that medieval editors cared about the legitimacy of texts.⁹⁷ A scribal note in a fourteenth-century codex of Jerome’s letters mentions that a letter to Demetrias with the incipit *Si summo ingenio* is not considered to be by Jerome but by a certain Pelagian called Julian.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Allen 5: 561-62, ep. 1504.

⁹⁶ Michel Foucault, “Qu’est-ce qu’un auteur?” in Foucault, *Dits et écrits: 1954-1988*, vol. 1, 1954-1969, ed. Daniel Defert, François Ewald, Jacques Lagrange (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 798.

⁹⁷ *Katalog der lateinischen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München: Die Pergamenthandschriften aus dem Domkapitel Freising*, 1: 174; BSB, Clm 6299, 157v.

⁹⁸ Cambridge UL, Kk. 2. 14, 291v.

Julian of Eclanum, aristocratic, surly, and intellectually sharp was the “singularly challenging opponent” of Augustine towards the end of his life, “his last bitter foe.”⁹⁹ Bede in the preface to his commentary on the Song of Songs, which doubled as a treatise on God’s grace against Julian, attributed the letter to this adversary.¹⁰⁰ Several fifteenth-century manuscripts did not contest Jerome’s authorship,¹⁰¹ but at least one in a marginal note next to the letter’s title mentioned that Augustine maintained that the letter was by Pelagius, not Jerome.¹⁰² Lelli knew that many believed that the letter was the work of a Pelagian. In his introduction to the letter, he cited Bede’s opinion and Augustine’s suspicion that Pelagius was the author. Despite Augustine’s view that the letter challenged God’s grace, Lelli included it in his edition because it contained much sound advice and was generally included among the manuscript collections of Jerome’s letters. Lelli also added Augustine’s letter to Juliana, the mother of Demetrias, in which the Bishop of Hippo voiced his suspicion. Modern scholarship has sustained Augustine’s surmise, even if someone else, perhaps Pelagius’ friend Annianus of Celeda, added polish to the style.¹⁰³

The spurious letter to Demetrias was first in a list of nine texts found “unworthy of attribution to such a great man” as was Jerome by Guiges du Châtel, prior of the Grande Chartreuse between 1109 and 1136.¹⁰⁴ Guiges, who in the prologue of his constitutions referred first to Jerome’s letters and then to the Rule of Benedict as sources of inspiration for the life of Carthusian monks, excluded these spuri-

⁹⁹ Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 387; O’Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography*, 49. For the most recent monographic study of Julian, see Josef Lössl, *Julian von Aeclanum: Studien zu seinem Leben, seinem Werk, seiner Lehre und ihrer Überlieferung* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), esp. 250-311, for the broader context of his conflict with Augustine between 418 and 430.

¹⁰⁰ CCSL 119B: 175.

¹⁰¹ Cambridge UL, Kk. 4. 16; DD. II. 7; BNF, Lat. 18067; BML, Plut. XIX, Cod. 9, Plut. XIX, Cod. 10, Ashburn 132 (formerly Ashburn 59).

¹⁰² BML, Fesul. 28, 113v. I am grateful to Dr. Giovanna Rao for confirming this reference.

¹⁰³ B. R. Rees, *Pelagius: Life and Letters*, 2 vols. (Woodbridge, Suffolk and Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 1998), 2: 31-35. For Augustine’s letter to Juliana (ep. 188), see CSEL 57: 119-30.

¹⁰⁴ *Lettres des premiers chartreux*, vol. 1, S. Bruno, Guiges, S. Anthelme, Sources Chrétiennes 88 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962), 214. On Guiges, see *Lexikon des Mittelalters* (Munich and Zurich: Artemis Verlag, 1980-), 4: cols. 1776-77, s. v. “Guigo. I. G. I. Carthusiensis (G. v. Kastell),” by J. Dubois.

ous texts from the “one large volume” of Jerome’s letters that he assembled.¹⁰⁵ While this edition is no longer extant, the letter, addressed to his fellow Carthusians in Durbon, in which Guiges identified the spurious texts, survives in two twelfth-century manuscripts.¹⁰⁶ Information from the writings of other doctors and discrepancies in style and opinion are the Carthusian editor’s explicit criteria for identifying spurious texts, although he rejects the *De origine animae disputatio* between Jerome and Augustine on historical grounds: the two Fathers never spoke face to face.¹⁰⁷

Adrian Brielis was aware of Guiges’s letter. After criticizing Giovanni d’Andrea, compiler of the *Hieronymianus*, for accepting whatever letters were attributed to Jerome, he refers to the “venerable prior Guiges the Carthusian” in the preface to his edition of Jerome. Whereas Guiges rejected some texts on account of stylistic differences, Brielis, following St. Paul, preferred to let each person abound in his own opinion (Romans 14: 5), leaving it up to his readers to make judgments about style. Consequently, Brielis did not reject the letter to Demetrias that Augustine believed was by Pelagius since it was similar in style and content to the other (genuinely Hieronymian) letter to Demetrias.

Even though it included many spurious writings, the *editio princeps* yields evidence of Lelli’s interest in authenticity. He insists that some books wrongly attributed to Pammachius Jerome’s letter to Rufinus (ep. 81), indicates that an unknown author produced the dialogue on the origin of the soul that supposedly took place between Augustine and Jerome, and reports the conjecture that Jerome wrote the letter that Marcella received from Paula and Eustochium (ep. 46) on account of its elegant style. The apocryphal *Liber de infantia salvatoris* is the target of Lelli’s harshest criticism. He discovered it in some manuscripts. Since it appears to contain old wives’ tales that could

¹⁰⁵ Bruno Rieder, *Deus locum dabit: Studien zur Theologie des Kartäuserspriors Guigo I. (1083-1136)* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1997), 52, 167; Guiges du Châtel, *Coutumes de Chartreuse*, Sources Chrétiennes 313 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1984), 156; *Lettres des premiers chartreux*, 1: 214.

¹⁰⁶ *Lettres des premiers chartreux*, 1: 211-12; Bibliothèque Mazarine (Paris), Ms. 577; and Deutsche Staatsbibliothek (Berlin), Phillips 1675, described in Valentin Rose, ed., *Verzeichniss der Lateinischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, vol. 1: *Die Meerman-Handschriften des Thomas Phillips*, Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin 12 (Berlin: A. Ascher & Co., 1893), 20-24.

¹⁰⁷ *Lettres des premiers chartreux*, 1: 214, 216.

fool the less sophisticated, he refused to publish it, deeming it unworthy to associate trifles with “the majesty of Jerome’s discourse.” Lelli remarks that it seemed to impugn the authority of the Gospel’s testimony that Jesus performed his first sign at Cana (John 2: 11). Ever the canon lawyer, he concludes with a specific reference to Gratian’s *Decretum* (D. 15 c. 3) that represents a quotation from the so-called *Decretum Gelasianum*, which duly counted the *Liber de infantia salvatoris* among various apocrypha.

In the preface to the second volume of his edition, Bussi admits that as a favour to some friends he tolerated “with shut eyes,” rather than agreed to, the insertion of many texts. He avoided ratifying what belonged to others, particularly those who ought always to revere Jerome’s footsteps and yet could neither approximate nor catch sight of his traces. Nevertheless, these works were by no means bad or unworthy of knowing even if they were inferior to Jerome’s brilliance and dignity. By implication the writings that Bussi reluctantly accepted were of better quality than the filth, not to say the nonsense, that the esteemed Giovanni d’Andrea unfortunately allowed to pass as Jerome’s.¹⁰⁸ In his first edition of Jerome’s letters (1468), Bussi identified the discussion on the origin of the soul as the work of an unknown author. He withdrew several more attributions to Jerome in the second edition (1470). Rufinus duly received credit for the exposition of the creed. The treatise on the Christian faith and way of life was not by Jerome and falsely attributed to him. Jerome was also not the author of a treatise addressed to Eustochium on St. Peter in chains or a letter on virginity to virgins vowed to God. Bussi classified both a letter on the body and blood of Christ and a homily on the Gospel of Matthew as uncertain. Yet he never challenged the authorship of the disputed letter to Demetrias, which he entitled the “Letter of Blessed Jerome, priest, to Demetrias on virginity and the perfect life.”

Obviously, the critical sifting of works ascribed to Jerome did not begin with Erasmus, who quarantined most, but not all, of the *spuria* in a separate volume. As we have seen, Erasmus added three spurious texts at the end of the volume of exegetical letters. In the first volume, moreover, he inserted a letter to Celantia (ep. 148) and a familiar letter to Augustine. The former, probably written by Pauli-

¹⁰⁸ Bussi, *Prefazioni*, 8.

nus of Nola, was eloquent and learned but diverged from Jerome's style. Erasmus included it owing to its subject matter—instructions for leading a pious life following Jerome's letter to Paulinus on the proper conduct of a monk (ep. 58)—and as a sample of the eloquence of Paulinus, which the “most eloquent Jerome” greatly praised.¹⁰⁹ Isidore Hilberg retained the letter to Celantia in his critical edition of Jerome's letters, noting that it appeared in a critical edition of Paulinus' works.¹¹⁰ More recently, scholars have attributed the letter to Pelagius.¹¹¹ In his *argumentum* to the letter to Augustine, Erasmus concedes that it is not sufficiently clear by whom or to whom the letter was written but believes the style is more characteristic of Augustine than of Jerome.¹¹²

While Erasmus' arrangement of most of the *spuria* was innovative, his decision to publish them in the first place was traditional. He retained the “old flavour” so as not to offend readers who enjoyed it. Identifying, like Guiges du Châtel, the *spuria* without publishing them would have been a more radical editorial strategy. Yet, at least with the third *ordo* of the *spuria*, in separating the texts from Jerome's genuine works, Erasmus believed he was rescuing his readers—he is thinking of theology students above all—from forgeries. He has kept students, he says in the second preface to the volume of *spuria*, “from reading the insipid blather of an obscure wretch instead of the most learned writings of a very great man.”¹¹³

Erasmus realized that his own approach was controversial. In the first preface to the volume of *spuria*, he writes: “Now there may be some who think that this is another matter that comes within the purview of the church because I have done away with the attributions imposed either by ignoramuses or by merchants or by impostors.” He insists that he has no intention of departing from the Church's teaching; his position is that incorrect attributions are not the product of ecclesiastical “pronouncements.”¹¹⁴ Anthony Grafton observed: “Purging the spurious, in fact, was central to Erasmus'

¹⁰⁹ *Opera* (1516), 1: 48r.

¹¹⁰ CSEL 56/1: 329. Hilberg refers to Wilhelm Hartel's edition of Paulinus in CSEL 29: 436-59.

¹¹¹ Rees, *Pelagius: Life and Letters*, 2: 127-28.

¹¹² *Opera* (1516), 1: 96r.

¹¹³ CWE 61: 94.

¹¹⁴ CWE 61: 67-68.

sense of his calling as a Christian scholar.”¹¹⁵ Should anyone object that authorial attribution is less important than the quality of a book, Erasmus replies for the benefit of the students of theology to whom he addresses his preface:

Perhaps in the case of Plautus’ plays it may not be so important. In the case of sacred writers and pillars of the church, however, from whom popes and theologians derive as from oracles their teachings on war, on the sacraments, and on the most serious matters, it will be, I think, of the greatest importance. Otherwise it will happen that the words, nay the nonsense, of some impostor presented with the name of Paul or Jerome would force me either to be silent or to accept what is not right. This we see every day being done in theological disputations, to the great amusement of those who are conversant with literature of prime quality...¹¹⁶

Given Erasmus’ design of restoring theology, of founding contemporary theology on an accurate reading of the Bible and on patristic commentary, liberating Jerome from forgeries is a vital task for Christian scholarship.

Forgeries should give no cause for surprise. Apocrypha or apocryphal interpolations, Erasmus explains in the first of two prefaces of the volume of *spuria*, are evident among the writings of Greek and Latin authors and of the Church Fathers. Some believed that apocrypha had crept into the Bible. Jerome rejected parts of Daniel and the third and fourth books of Ezra. Others had doubted the canonicity of Judith, Esther, Tobit, Wisdom, Hebrews, Revelation. Human error or mischief account for assigning works to the wrong author. Readers confuse the name of two authors; booksellers “misuse the names of famous writers for their own profit.”¹¹⁷ More reprehensible was the composition of works with the deliberate intent to deceive others by assuming the voice of a different author. Yet Erasmus, writing in the second preface, is not sure what is more startling: “the most insolent madness” of the nameless forger who passed off many texts as Jerome’s or “our stupefaction in reading now for several centuries the banalities of an unknown wretch as the work of Jerome,

¹¹⁵ Grafton, *Forgers and Critics*, 43.

¹¹⁶ CWE 61: 75-76.

¹¹⁷ CWE 61: 71-74; quote: 74.

whose learning, eloquence, and holiness are absolutely beyond compare."¹¹⁸

Ironically, Erasmus, who excoriated the "most shameless ranter and sacrilegious impostor,"¹¹⁹ did not have an impeccable record of transparent honesty when it came to the transmission of texts. He never admitted to writing the *Julius exclusus* (1518), a dialogue in which St. Peter explains to the deceased Pope Julius II (1503-1513) why he is unworthy of heavenly reward, yet contemporaries and several modern scholars suspect that Erasmus was the author. Silvana Seidel Menchi, following the lead of early modern editors of Cyprian, including Henricus Gravius, has argued that Erasmus forged the treatise *De duplici martyrio*, which he added to his third edition (1530) of the works of the third-century African Church Father.¹²⁰

With less fanfare than in the edition of Jerome, Erasmus included *spuria* in his later patristic editions. A note to the reader at the beginning of the first volume of the edition of Ambrose's *opera omnia* (1527) points out that the volume contains works that teach Christian morals since these deserve the highest priority. But Erasmus has not removed the *spuria* either because they are short or not unworthy to be read.¹²¹ Neither in this edition or that of Augustine's complete works (1528-1529) does Erasmus isolate counterfeit texts in a separate volume or separate section within a volume.

As with Guiges, style was Erasmus' principal criterion for detecting counterfeit texts. His "discriminations," Rice commented, "were overwhelmingly stylistic, based on the sensitivity of his ear, the virtuosity of his Latin, the fineness of his response to the differing tone, rhythm, and diction of individual authors, and above all his comprehensive feeling for the distinguishing characteristics of Jerome's own prose."¹²² Admittedly, Erasmus' stylistic criteria for detecting the genuine and forged Jerome can strike us as "vague."¹²³ Style, as

¹¹⁸ CWE 61: 83-84.

¹¹⁹ CWE 61: 89.

¹²⁰ Silvana Seidel Menchi, "Un'opera misconosciuta di Erasmo? Il trattato pseudo-Cipriano '*De duplici martyrio*,'" *Rivista storica italiana* 90 (1978): 709-43.

¹²¹ *Divi Ambrosii episcopi Mediolanensis omnia opera* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1527), 1: AA1v.

¹²² Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 125-26.

¹²³ Alexandre Vanautgaerden, "Croire à tout, croire à rien: La question du style dans les lettres-préfaces d'Érasme à son édition de saint Jérôme (Bâle, Jean Froben,

he writes in the first preface to the volume of *spuria*, included “manner in language and diction, texture, so to speak, and, further, thought and judgment, line of argumentation, inventive power, control of material, emotion, and what the Greeks call ἦθος,” which means mores, character, or temperament.¹²⁴ Erasmus’ *censurae* commonly invoke style as the reason why Jerome was not the author of a particular text, but the editor clearly does not always limit style to phrasing or diction. On three occasions, he links affect (*pectus*) with style. The treatise on the three virtues exhibited neither “the least bit of Hieronymian diction nor any vestige of his heart;” a treatise on the divine attributes found in Scripture does not at all smack of Jerome’s language, erudition, or heart. It was impossible to discern “a shadow of Jerome’s heart” in a sermon on the resurrection. The *censura* on this text does not mention any of Erasmus’ stock words for literary expression, such as *stilus*, *phrasis*, *dictio*, or *sermo*.¹²⁵

Le style est l’homme même: Erasmus would have seconded Buffon’s now famous aphorism. Like the ancients and many other writers who preceded and came after the eighteenth-century *philosophe*, Erasmus believed in the consistency between personality and expression, between on the one hand who one is and on the other what one says and how one says it.¹²⁶ In the first preface of the volume of *spuria*, he insists that “the surest sign” of a writer’s identity is

the character and quality of speech. As each individual has his own appearance, his own voice, his own character and disposition, so each has his own style of writing. And the quality of mind is manifest in speech even more than the likeness of the body is reflected in a mirror.

Should Erasmus come across “five words distinctive of Jerome, I would not hesitate a moment to affirm that Jerome was the writer.” Jerome’s superior qualities—“an inborn vitality of mind which I may call preternatural, a marvelous fertility, an incomparable fervour, eloquence, sanctity, a knowledge of Sacred Scripture, a passionate

1516)” in *Philologie et subjectivité: Actes de la journée d’étude organisée par l’École nationale des chartes* (Paris, 5 avril 2001), ed. Dominique de Courcelles (Paris: École des chartes, 2002), 67.

¹²⁴ CWE 61: 78.

¹²⁵ *Opera* (1516), 2: 35v, 53v, 88r.

¹²⁶ Wolfgang G. Müller, “Der Topos ‘Le style est l’homme même’,” *Neophilologus* 61 (1977): 481-94.

application of study”—mark him off and set him above all other Latin Christian authors. For his ability to evaluate attributions of authorship Erasmus depended in part “on the intimacy which repeated readings of Jerome’s works gained for me.”¹²⁷ Consequently he invoked what Harold Love calls “the experienced reader’s deep interiorisation of the style (in all its complexity) of a much-loved writer who is known as well as any other close friend is known.” This Erasmusian approach to attributing authorship is a limited one, however; it is fundamentally impressionistic and intuitive,¹²⁸ and thus in and of itself not convincing. Stylistic evidence remains valid, albeit insufficient without other, more scientific, criteria.¹²⁹

Respect for the evidence of style unites Erasmus with Jerome, who used style to establish textual authenticity,¹³⁰ and modern scholarship on Jerome. Erasmus maintained that the letter to Praesidius on the Easter candle was the work of more than one person. The author of the first part imitated Jerome’s style and thus demonstrated learning and eloquence. But the second part was the work of a “hack” (*rabula*). The nonsense that he patched onto the letter was not only ignorant; it was irrelevant.¹³¹ Morin argued against Erasmus and subsequent critics for the authenticity of the letter, dismissing objections about differences in style. Indeed, “the very pronounced Hieronymian character” of the letter’s style along with the “authority of the manuscripts” and the “perfect accord of the smallest historical details” point to Jerome’s authorship.¹³² Despite Morin’s protestations, Georg Grützmacher held that the letter’s style prevented an attribution to Jerome. Ferdinand Cavallera continued to dispute the letter’s authenticity, for the style (*la phrase*) did not perfectly reflect Jerome’s tone (*le son hieronymien*), and “a certain incoherence in the development”

¹²⁷ CWE 61: 76, 78, 79, 80.

¹²⁸ Harold Love, *Attributing Authorship: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 21 (quotation), 22, 132.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 118, 132–62.

¹³⁰ Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 121.

¹³¹ *Opera* (1516), 2: 68r.

¹³² Germain Morin, “Un écrit méconnu de saint Jérôme: La ‘Lettre à Présidius’ sur le cierge pascal,” *Revue bénédictine* 8 (1891): 22–23, 25. See also two other essays by Morin, “La lettre de saint Jérôme sur le cierge pascal: Réponse à quelques difficultés de M. l’abbé L. Duchesne,” *Revue bénédictine* 9 (1892): 392–97; and “Pour l’authenticité de la lettre de S. Jérôme à Présidius,” *Bulletin d’ancienne littérature et archéologie chrétiennes* 3 (1913): 52–60.

was entirely foreign to Jerome.¹³³ More recent scholarship, following Morin, has reclaimed the letter for Jerome.¹³⁴

Style was not the only criterion on which Erasmus based his judgments. Rice identified a series of other inconsistencies that Erasmus noted in the *censurae*. In one case, Pseudo-Jerome gave a full name, Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, which appears in no other letters; in another, he admitted ignorance of Greek and Hebrew; in still another, he informed Paula and Eustochium that he wanted to write them in Latin, which the genuine Jerome always did. Sure signs of forgery were anachronistic word usage, the lack of references to Jerome's correspondents or to a particular spurious letter in the genuine letters, and attributions in manuscripts to various authors for the same text.¹³⁵ Erasmus also invoked the judgment of the Roman, that is Bussi's, edition, to support his case for the inauthenticity of a letter in praise of virginity.¹³⁶

Some forgeries in the first class or series, as Erasmus also calls it, won his admiration; that he retained others here was a mark of his tolerance. Pelagius' letter to Demetrias was "thoroughly learned and eloquent," while the author of the letter to a sick friend on the perfect man was eloquent and learned.¹³⁷ Erasmus uses double negatives in two other cases: the letter to the daughters of Geruntius as well as the reproof of Evagrius were not without eloquence or learning (*nec infans, nec erudita; nec inaequoquens, nec indocta*).¹³⁸ Yet the letter to Dardanus on the several kinds of musicians hardly deserves to belong to the texts of the first *ordo*. A sermon on Lent is so unlike Jerome that Erasmus might have consigned it to the third *ordo*, except that he preferred to err on the side of keeping an unworthy text to rejecting what was worthy. Were it not for his discretion (*modestia*), he would have also put into the same class of texts the letter to Eustochium on St. Peter in chains and another on the holding of vigils.¹³⁹

¹³³ Georg Grützmacher, *Hieronymus: eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte*, 3 vols. (1901-1908; repr., Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1986), 1: 12-13; Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 1: 101-102, n. 3.

¹³⁴ BHM 1B: 1074-77, no. 155; BHM 3A: 96, no. 318; Stefan Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992), 170 and n. 182; Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 208.

¹³⁵ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 127-28.

¹³⁶ *Opera* (1516), 2: 49v.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 2: 4v, 23r.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 2: 23r, 84r.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 2: 87r, 90r, 92r, 94r.

The second series separates forgeries of mixed literary quality from those most offensive to Jerome's reputation. A note at the head of the series explains why the *aliena* it contains have been grouped together. First, they did not seem relevant to Jerome's writings, such as Augustine's treatise on the origin of the soul (ep. 131). Second, they were too long-winded for Erasmus to impose on his readers. He specifically had in mind "those things which in large tomes Rufinus babbled against St. Jerome." They were utterly without value except that on their account "the apology of the most eloquent doctor could be understood a little more clearly."¹⁴⁰

The second class begins with a dossier of texts relevant to Rufinus' controversy with Jerome over Origen. Then followed four works by Augustine: the letters to Jerome on the meaning of James 2: 10 (ep. 132) and on the origin of the soul (ep. 131), a missive to Optatus on the origin of the soul, and the homily on pastors. Gennadius' continuation of Jerome's *De viris illustribus* is the only installment in this series that receives a *censura*. Although it is neither completely learned nor eloquent, it merits attention for its historical value.¹⁴¹ After a rule for monks and a rule for nuns, come three texts whose authors are unknown: the discussion between Jerome and Augustine on the soul, the homily on the body and blood of Christ, and the homily on Matthew. Vergerio's eighth oration on Jerome completes the series.

The third series or class of texts contains not only the most egregiously absurd *spuria* but also, implausibly, the products of one and the same impostor. Erasmus conjectured that the forger was a member of the Augustinian Eremites, "some busybody with pretensions to learning who while copying books snatched up bits of knowledge." He forged texts in part to increase income from the increasing production of books, in part "to promote by his efforts greater respect among the common people for his own way of life."¹⁴² In his *censurae* in the third series, Erasmus "deployed with relish the full range of classical rhetorical abuse."¹⁴³ A few examples will suffice.

The third series opens with the consolation for Tyrasius on the death of his daughter. Erasmus invites readers to consider the rhe-

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 2: 101r.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 2: 156v.

¹⁴² CWE 61: 88.

¹⁴³ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 126.

torical disaster that this letter represents. The entire style was a shambles, so devoid of eloquence that it could not even be called semi-Latin. The development of ideas (*inventio*) was a complete failure, the scriptural references few and unconvincing. The “most shameless hack” did not speak but babbled whatever came into his mouth. Nevertheless this “most agreeable man,” by ascribing his nonsense to Jerome, dared to hope that it would be read as Jerome’s. Folly, of course, will always attract admirers. Erasmus concludes the *censura* by identifying some of these: self-important theologians.¹⁴⁴

Who would not scoff at “this ape” who wrote the letter to Oceanus on the life of the clergy? Erasmus takes the liberty of saying what he thinks: the author was either a drunk or a victim of a fever. His style was “archaic (*reliquus*), infantile, disordered, insipid, slack (*diffluens*), replete with the most vile monstrosities of verbiage.” Anyone incapable of distinguishing it from Jerome’s could not tell the difference between a donkey and a horse.¹⁴⁵ Clearly, both gullible readers, who perpetuated the attributions of forgeries to Jerome, as well as the forgeries themselves and their author were Erasmus’ targets.

Three other examples illustrate his impatience with inept forgeries. Introducing a spurious letter to Pope Damasus, Erasmus asks: How could anyone be so stupid as to expect that the letter, whose lack of sparkle, of learning, and of eloquence were unparalleled, could be read as if it were by Jerome? Who could not immediately apprehend the impostor from the letter’s salutation, except with eyes closed? No one could write anything more crazed or more intoxicated than the fever and the drunkenness that was a catalogue of ecclesiastical writers addressed to Desiderius. Its author was a “bumpkin,” a “most stupid beast.” Erasmus asks his reader at the end of the *censura* not to be surprised that he gives vent to his irritation, for what supporter of literature or of Jerome, “a man of such incomparable glory,” could endure without displeasure that “such unlearned, stupid, insane blatherings are assigned to the name of Jerome?” The whole style of the rule for nuns was beneath a servant in Jerome’s kitchen.¹⁴⁶

Style had a double function for Erasmus. As the crucial criterion for attributing authorship it too served as an essential principle of classification. For an editor determined to clarify and purify the tex-

¹⁴⁴ *Opera* (1516), 2: 191v.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 2: 194r, 194v.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 2: 195v, 196r, 197v.

tual transmission of Jerome, style became the constant test for separating genuine patristic authority from Pseudo-Jerome. The volume of *spuria* is the most conspicuous witness to the organizational power of stylistic considerations and the often brash confidence that Erasmus displayed in his own editorial judgments.

Erasmian Influence, New Departures

That several editors in the second half of the sixteenth century chose to follow Erasmus' ordering of Jerome's texts is an index of the influence of his edition. As noted in Chapter 1, the *Epistolarum D. Hieronymi Stridonensis decas prima* (1568) consisted of the first ten letters taken from Erasmus' edition. The more extensive Italian anthology *Epistole di S. Girolamo, dottore della chiesa* (1562) followed Erasmus' order of letters with one minor change. After reproducing the first eleven letters in Erasmus' edition, the anthology continued, respectively, with the fourteenth, fifteenth, twelfth, and thirteenth letters. The anthology's sixteenth letter corresponds with Erasmus' sixteenth and never again strayed from the Erasmian sequence. Whenever it omitted one or more texts, it proceeded down the list of the contents of the volumes of the genuine letters. It included all the letters that Erasmus placed in his first volume with the exception of the *De viris illustribus*. Only ten texts from the volume of polemical writings but almost all of the letters of the volume of exegetical texts, including the opening missive to Paulinus (ep. 53) and the twenty biblical prefaces, found their way into the anthology. The statement that marked the end of Jerome's letters—*Il fine delle Pistole di San Girolamo*—in effect separated them from the final document in the anthology, the spurious rule for nuns. The title for the *regola* does not attribute it to Jerome; an editorial comment points out that it was "extracted" from Jerome's various writings to Eustochium and other women.¹⁴⁷ Erasmus' isolation of the *spuria* clearly had an effect on the Italian anthology, which did not include any text from the Erasmian volume of *spuria* among Jerome's letters. It did retain the dubious familiar letter to Augustine with an editorial advisory, perhaps based on Erasmus,

¹⁴⁷ *Epistole di S. Girolamo, dottore della chiesa* (Venice: Lucantonio Giunta, 1562), 359v, 360r.

that it was open to doubt whether the letter was by Jerome to Augustine or by Augustine to Jerome.¹⁴⁸

Juan Corduba's anthology, *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae aliquot selecta* (1572), was more selective than the Italian *Epistole*. Besides borrowing from Erasmus' biography of Jerome and *scholia*, Corduba arranged Jerome's letters with an eye on the table of contents in Erasmus' edition. As with Erasmus, he began with the letters to Heliodorus and Nepotian (epp. 14, 52). Passing over the epitaph on Nepotian, the Spanish editor resumed with the letter to Rusticus on the monastic life (ep. 125) and moved on to the two letters to Florentius (epp. 4, 5) and the letter to Laeta (ep. 107) before omitting other letters and then taking up again the Erasmian *ordo*, alternating between the inclusion and exclusion of texts. Most of the forty-eight Hieronymian texts came from Erasmus' first volume. A series of letters from the volume of polemics began with the first two letters to Damasus (epp. 15, 16) in that volume and ended with the letter to Onasus (ep. 40). Here Corduba must have followed Erasmus' thinking—a departure from Lelli and not sustained by Hilberg—that the letter was addressed not to Marcella about Onasus but to Onasus himself. With Jerome's preface to the Pentateuch the anthology crossed over into the exegetical letters, but then it reverted to the final two installments from the polemics, letters to Pammachius and Marcella (ep. 57, 22), before proceeding to the first of the exegetical letters, the letter to Paulinus (ep. 53). The final text from Jerome was his life of Paul the hermit, which Erasmus placed towards the end of his first volume. Corduba concluded his selection with the letter of the Church Father Cyprian of Carthage to Donatus (ep. 1).

The most faithful student of Erasmus' classification was his most vehement competitor, Mariano Vittori. Vittori adopted Erasmus' ordering of Jerome's letters without the slightest modification. The edition of the letters, the *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos* (1564-1565) produces only the genuine letters, dividing them into three volumes.

Unlike Erasmus, Vittori does not group the texts of the first volume under the heading of moral instruction, or any heading for that matter. Only at the very end of the volume does a concluding note refer to the genre of its letters: "The first volume of the works of St.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 146v.

Jerome, comprising those that are especially relevant for the conduct of life, to which is appended the *Catalogue of Famous Writers*.”¹⁴⁹ In terms of its Hieronymian contents Vittori’s first volume copies the Erasmian edition perfectly. Vittori includes the letter to Celantia, ascribing it to Paulinus of Nola; he does not attribute to any specific person the dubious letter to Augustine, although he notes that the style does not seem to be Jerome’s; he concludes the volume with the *De viris illustribus*, using this title but adding an alternate title, *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*. The title that runs across the heads of the pages coincides with Erasmus’ *Catalogus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum*.¹⁵⁰ The title mentioned in the concluding note of the volume—*Catalogus scriptorum illustrium*—matches the title in Erasmus’ table of contents.

The title of the second volume imitates the title for the controversial writings in Erasmus’ edition, for it contains, as the title page announces, “the *elenctica* and *apologetica*, to be sure, those works pertaining to various heresies and the false charges of slanderers.” The only difference is that Vittori omits the reference to the *refutation* of the heresies and false charges in Erasmus’ title. Similarly, Vittori’s title for the third volume recalls Erasmus’ title for the exegetical volume. The Italian editor subsumed its contents under the generic label (in Greek) *exegetica*, more common than Erasmus’ *exegetica*, works that “pertain to the exposition of Sacred Scripture”—*quae ad explanationem divinae scripturae pertinent*. Erasmus described them as relevant or beneficial to the same objective: *quae ad explanationem divinae scripturae faciunt*. Vittori follows Erasmus in ending the volume with the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, the *Hebrew Questions on the Books of Kings*, the *Hebrew Questions on Chronicles*, the *Hebrew Places*, the *Places in the Acts of the Apostles* (*De actis apostolorum*), and the *Hebrew Names*. He placed these in the same order as Erasmus did, and he also held the second, third, and fifth members of this list to be spurious.

Vittori’s edition of Jerome’s *opera omnia* (1571-1576) placed the *spuria* in the ninth and final volume. This he introduced with a general *censura*. Unlike Erasmus, he did not comment on the contents with individual *censurae*; nor did he insert lengthy prefaces justifying the volume’s *raison d’être*. Vittori began by pointing out that his ninth volume included all the letters “with the same series and the same

¹⁴⁹ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3 vols. (Rome: Paolo Manuzio, 1564-1565), 1: 187.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1: 58, 132, 169-87.

order” that had been previously printed in the “fourth volume,” an acknowledged debt to Erasmus without mentioning his name, for the fourth volume of the second and subsequent Erasmian editions of the *opera omnia* contained the *spuria*. According to Vittori, the first series consisted of texts whose authors were unknown, the second, texts whose titles revealed their authors, and the third, texts that were not as “learned and scholarly” as those in the preceding series. Style was the primary criterion for identifying the *spuria*. In one case, Vittori disagreed emphatically with Erasmus, again without mentioning his name, when he claimed that the apology for Origen attributed to the early fourth-century martyr, Pamphilus, was written by Eusebius of Caesarea.¹⁵¹ Later in the volume, in a lengthy preface to the work addressed to the pious and learned reader, Vittori quotes Jerome in support of his position.¹⁵² Modern scholarship, however, regards Pamphilus as the author. At the end of his life, with the help of Eusebius his disciple he wrote an *Apology* in five books, to which Eusebius added a sixth after Pamphilus’ death. Only the first of the five books survived, and that in a Latin translation by Rufinus of dubious value.¹⁵³

A circumspect description of the classification of *spuria*, especially of the third series, replaces Erasmus’ contempt. At the end of his introduction to ninth volume, Vittori recommends respect for the *spuria*. Counterfeits commonly appear among the works of writers of every sort of persuasion, such as Aristotle, Hippocrates, Galen, and, among Christians, Augustine, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Thomas Aquinas. But these forgeries contain learning and truth; they deserve to be read by the faithful. Although the letters of the present volume are by no means Jerome’s, they are nevertheless the product of holy and intelligent men. They can be read as the works of ecclesiastical authorities. It matters little who wrote something when it embodies “both orthodox faith and pious erudition.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ *D. Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia*, 9 vols. (Rome: In aedibus populi Romani, 1571-1576), 9: +2r.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 9: 193-95.

¹⁵³ Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, 3 vols. (Westminster, MD: Newman Press; Utrecht and Antwerp: Spectrum, 1962-1963), 2: 145-46, 3: 340-41; Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 159-63.

¹⁵⁴ *D. Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia* (Rome, 1571-1576), 9: +2r.

What a difference paratexts can make to a reader's reception of texts! In his prefaces and *censurae* Erasmus emphasized the inauthentic, if not also the repulsive, nature of the *spuria*. Vittori did not reiterate his reluctance in printing them; instead, the Italian editor commended them to his readership. He agreed with Erasmus that *spuria* were legion but obviously disagreed on the crucial connection between authorship and authority. To Erasmus it mattered a great deal who wrote what, especially in theology. The authenticity of texts and the stature of their author contributed to the authority that their reception should recognize. Internal criteria, orthodoxy and piety, were sufficient for Vittori. Whereas the Erasmian paratexts make plain the isolation of the *spuria*, Vittori's introductory *censura* suggests not so much a separation, or even a relegation to the final volume of the *opera omnia*, but a respectable appendix to the corpus of Jerome's works.

The other renowned sixteenth-century Catholic editor of Jerome, Peter Canisius, took an independent course in the matter of classification, although he preserved a broader triune taxonomy. In the original preface to his anthology, Canisius noted that he had arranged the volume into three parts "so that everything might cohere more suitably." He placed in the first book the obviously familiar letters that attracted attention by reason of their subject matter or of the brevity and clarity of their contents. The second he devoted to the

weightier letters that more copiously and in greater detail discuss matters of great importance. Here Jerome instructs clergymen, monks, girls, virgins, widows, matrons, and Christians of practically every rank, gender, and age, no doubt, like Paul, made all things for all people so that he could gain everyone in Christ (1 Corinthians 9: 22).

The third book consists of histories, "and it offers outstanding examples of male and female saints." From these texts readers will derive various benefits as well as a type of holy delight. At the end, Canisius inserted Jerome's polemic against Vigilantius, of contemporary relevance to Catholics in light of the revived "Vigilantian plague" in the form of the Protestant critique of the cult of the saints. The Jesuit editor admitted abridging some texts but not because he disapproved of the passages from Jerome that he omitted. In accord with "the

purpose of our enterprise”—no doubt a reference to the intended student audience of the anthology—he thought it wise to leave out discussions of difficult mysteries as well unhelpful digressions. Canisius never identified which letters he abridged, but a reading of his edition of the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) reveals that he excised the famous passage in which Jerome recounted his vision of being beaten for being a Ciceronian, not a Christian. Readers interested in complete texts could consult the “large and thick volumes or tomes” comprising Jerome in a nine-volume edition available everywhere.¹⁵⁵ In November 1561, when Canisius penned the preface to first edition of the anthology (1562), the only nine-volume edition of Jerome was that of Erasmus, of course. The same was true in 1565, when Canisius’ revised preface appeared in the second edition of the anthologized *Epistolae*.

The contents of the anthology became stable only with the first Parisian printing in 1582, reprinted in 1583 with a table of contents. In the second edition, Canisius withdrew from Book 1 a letter of a mere few lines to Augustine (ep. 142) and from Book 2 the letter to Riparius (ep. 109), which in the first edition also served as an introduction to the *Adversus Vigilantium* at the end of the volume. Canisius remedied an unnecessary repetition only to allow for another redundancy. In 1562, the epitaph on Nepotian (ep. 60) appeared in excerpted form in Book 3. That is where it remained in 1565, even though, as part of a revision, the complete letter concluded Book 2. An edition printed in Louvain in 1573 made no changes to the anthology’s contents. Canisius corrected the error in the 1582 edition; the abbreviated letter disappeared. To Book 3 he added Jerome’s warning to Marcella against Montanism (ep. 41). This letter preceded the missive to Riparius and the attack on Vigilantius, now both integrated into Book 3. In other respects, the 1582 edition reflected the contents and order of the 1565 edition. With at least one exception—an edition printed by Wilhelm Friessem in Cologne in 1674 that followed the 1565 edition—the 1582 edition remained normative for its successors, such as the editions printed in Louvain in 1596 and Lyon in 1687.

The fifty-eight familiar letters of Book 1 in the 1565 and later editions begin with a series of Jerome’s early correspondence—to

¹⁵⁵ PCE 3: 278-79.

Niceas (ep. 8), Julian the deacon (ep. 6), Chrysogonus (ep. 9), Florentius (epp. 4, 5), and Anthony (ep. 12). The seventh letter in Book 1, addressed to Theophilus (ep. 99) is separated from an exchange between Jerome and the Bishop of Alexandria (epp. 63, 87, 86, 88, 89), that constitute the forty-seventh to fifty-first letters. Similarly, letters 17 to 22 between Augustine and Jerome (epp. 101, 102, 134, 111, 115, 103) are isolated from letters 56 to 58—to Alypius and Augustine (ep. 143), Augustine (ep. 141), and Marcellinus and Anapsychia (ep. 126). Canisius incorporated the biblical prefaces to Tobit, Chronicles, and Ezra and Nehemiah into Book 1. His anthology is unique among early modern editions of Jerome's letters in that it includes some prefaces to Jerome's biblical commentaries: one to Pammachius on Amos, one to Eustochium on Isaiah, three to the same woman on Ezekiel, one to Exuperius on Zechariah. Even here Canisius did not group these texts together. The prefaces comprise letters 30 to 34 and 46 in Book 1. Another preface, to Jerome's polemic against Rufinus addressed to Pammachius and Marcellinus, also found its way into the familiar letters.

In 1565 and afterwards, the subtitle to Book 2 explains that its twenty-two letters "seem not to be as familiar as the preceding ones but to offer some more sublime and more dignified things."¹⁵⁶ An elevated quality is all the installments of this part of the anthology have in common. The first of these, the letter to Magnus in defence of secular learning (ep. 70) leads to the survey of Scripture for Paulinus (ep. 53), which in turn moves on to the rebuke of Sabinianus (ep. 147). Book 2 contains, among others, the letters to Nepotian (ep. 52), Rusticus (ep. 125), and Paulinus (ep. 58) on clerics and monks and to Eustochium (ep. 22) and Demetrias on virginity (ep. 130).

Book 3 seems more homogenous. It begins with the *vitae* of Paul, Hilarion, and Malchus. Praiseworthy *exempla* form the common denominator of the letter to Salvina, in which Jerome pays tribute to her deceased husband Nebridius (ep. 79), the epitaph on Lucinus (ep. 75), the letter on the woman struck seven times (ep. 1), and the eulogies of Paula, Marcella, and Fabiola (epp. 108, 127, 77). Did Canisius insert Jerome's discussion of the vestments of the Jewish high priest (ep. 64) because it counted as history? It would have made

¹⁵⁶ *Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Dillingen: Sebaldus Mayer, 1565), 55r.

more sense to keep the epitaph on Nepotian (ep. 60) in Book 3 instead of deploying it to Book 2.

Cornelius Schulting's *Confessio Hieronymiana* (1585) represents the most systematic organization of Jerome in the sixteenth century. It is not an anthology of letters but a theological digest of excerpts from Jerome, a presentation of Hieronymian proof texts corresponding to a series of specific topics or articles. Schulting turned Jerome's oeuvre into a confessionalized *summa theologiae*. He imported into the *Confessio Hieronymiana* the structure that Jerónimo de Torres devised for the *Confessio Augustiniana* (1567). Accordingly, Schulting divided his digest into four books: (1) the foundations of theology, (2) Christian righteousness, lost and restored, (3) the sacraments of the Church, and (4) purgatory, the cult of the saints, images, fasting, celibacy and the various ceremonies and ancient rituals of the Church. These books consist of several chapters that are analyzed in a series of articles. Following Torres, Book 1, for example, is divided into thirteen chapters: (1) God, (2) the Trinity and God's unity, (3) God the Father, (4) Christ, true God and man, (5) the Holy Spirit, (6) the Church, (7) Scripture, (8) traditions, (9) Peter the apostle, the Roman pontiff, the Apostolic See and faith, (10) Church councils, (11) the authority of the Fathers and doctors of the Church, (12) heretics, (13) the duty and authority of the magistrate against heretics. To the articles of each chapter Schulting attached one or, usually, more excerpts from Jerome, following the order in which the texts appeared in Vittori's edition of the *opera omnia*.

In the treatment of the Church (Book 1, Chapter 6), Article 6, which identifies the claim that the Church consists only of good people as the heresy of the Donatists and Pelagians, is conspicuous for relying on only one text, a passage from Jerome's *Commentary on Jeremiah*.¹⁵⁷ Article 1, proclaiming "that the Church is one, holy Catholic, and Roman," rests on twenty-three proof texts.¹⁵⁸ Article 9 more than doubles this number. Fifty-four excerpts support the statement "that there is no salvation outside of the Catholic Church, and that outside her there is no evidence of either martyrdom, or virginity, or any good works." Schulting begins with passages from the long letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) in which Jerome defames

¹⁵⁷ *Confessio Hieronymiana*, ed. Cornelius Schulting (Cologne: Birckmann, 1585), 84.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 170-72.

heretical, particularly Manichean, virgins as prostitutes; from the letter to Rusticus the monk (ep. 125) in which Jerome advises against feeling sympathy for the gentile and Jew “who never were in the Church;” from the letter to Damasus (ep. 15) whom Jerome informs that “whoever eats the lamb outside the house is not holy;” from the *Dialogue against the Luciferians* that recommends remaining in the Church established by the apostles and considers those to belong “not to the Church of Christ but to the synagogue of Antichrist” who take their name not from Christ but from others, as in the case of the Marcionites, Valentinians, and those of the mountain (*Montenses*) and of the plains (*Campistae*); and from the letter to Fabiola (ep. 64) in which Jerome writes that after dwelling in the Church we ascend the mountain that is Christ. This last passage lacks the exclusivity of its predecessors.¹⁵⁹ The remaining proof texts of Article 9 come from Jerome’s scriptural commentaries.

Conclusion

More than half of a century ago, Paul Antin emphasized the sheer diversity of Jerome’s letters. Combined, they formed a miscellany—*un volume de “Mélanges”*—consisting of pieces that today would appear in periodical literature and as funereal eulogies, letters of counsel, pamphlets and tracts. Antin believed that the early effort to arrange the letters into distinct categories was a mistake, criticizing this sort of classification as arbitrary and as harmful to chronology. As an example, he refers to a “translator from the end of the sixteenth century” who placed into a second division of letters texts that were not as familiar as those in the preceding division, for they supply things more sublime and of greater importance. This translator, moreover, deployed the letters to Augustine, written between approximately 397 and 419, before those to Damasus, who died in 384.¹⁶⁰ Jean de Lavardin was the unnamed translator, who had reproduced the classification and order of texts of Canisius’ anthology.¹⁶¹ Antin’s criticism betrays a modern editorial bias, beginning with Jean Mar-

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 193-94.

¹⁶⁰ Paul Antin, *Essai sur saint Jérôme* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1951), 184-85.

¹⁶¹ For the categorization of the second set of letters see *D. Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae selectae* (Paris: Sébastien Nivelle, 1582), 78v; and *Épistres Saint Hierosme divisées en trois livres* (Paris: Guillaume Chaudière, 1585), 77r.

tianay and perpetuated by Domenico Vallarsi and Isidore Hilberg, that Jerome's letters should be arranged in chronological order. Georg Grützmacher, Ferdinand Cavallera, and J. N. D. Kelly, Jerome's leading biographers in the twentieth century, pursued, reasonably enough, a chronological trajectory.

Now in the twenty-first century, Alfons Fürst has in effect refused to submit to the chronological imperative. In what serves as an indispensable *instrumentum Hieronymianum*, a scholarly introduction to Jerome, replete with a prosopographical register, excerpts from Jerome in translation, and an analytical bibliography—appendices that take up more than half of his book, Fürst subordinates biography to theology. A short biographical sketch appears after the main narrative, whose purpose is to develop the “theological profile” of Jerome the ascetic and the biblical scholar.¹⁶² Fürst leads his readers into Jerome's reputation for erudition and spirituality by briefly drawing attention to the complex reception of Jerome in the thought of Luther and Erasmus and in late medieval and early modern iconography. Although the title of the book identifies two controlling concepts for an analysis of Jerome, asceticism and scholarship, a threefold schema emerges in the narrative: theological controversies, asceticism, and scholarship. These three categories endure in the division of the textual samplings of Jerome. They return us to familiar territory, to the threefold arrangement of Jerome's letters into the categories of dogma, moral and spiritual advice, and exegesis. The order represents a new configuration, however. With Lelli it commences with doctrine, albeit under the more Erasmian heading of controversies, and with Erasmus it culminates in scriptural scholarship, yet never before had Jerome the moral and spiritual authority, now called an ascetic, taken second place.

By the second half of the fifteenth century, *pace* the editions printed by Mentelin and Schoeffer, the hierarchical, or perhaps ecclesiological, structuring of Jerome's letters gave way to a tripartite theological approach. The application of the three principal categories that Lelli's edition made canonical antedated the age of print in Vat. lat. 348 and perhaps also in Plut. XIX, Cod. 11. Did these manuscripts initiate a new classification, or were they heirs to an already existing one that a closer study of manuscripts will reveal? Of course, the

¹⁶² Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 6.

manuscripts had more than three categories, yet the fourth (on friendship) and the fifth (on consolation) were easily assimilated into Lelli's third category, while the (spurious) homiletic texts found their way into his second part.

Erasmus revised the Lellian structure, changing the order of the three parts and giving them new names. Lardet believes that the emphasis on genre and function in the Erasmian categories distinguishes them from the Lellian system in which genre is subordinate to theology.¹⁶³ Nevertheless, Erasmus' profile of Jerome is just as theological as that of Lelli or of Fürst. His Jerome is the teacher of Christian conduct, the opponent of heresies, the expositor of Scripture. To pass from the first to the last aspect of this theological profile is to drink more deeply from the well of *sacra eruditio*. Even Erasmus' great contribution to the classification of Jerome, the identification of the *spuria* and the isolation of most of them, serves a theological purpose. Informed theologians, when invoking Jerome's authority, would limit themselves to the Church Father's genuine writings.

Erasmus did not invent the theological order imposed on Jerome's letters, but he transmitted it in refashioned form. In Vittori's edition, that order endured until Martianay dissolved it in the early eighteenth century. Theology conceded some ground to genre in Canisius' edition, since he simply classified the contents of the first book as familiar. Reprintings of this edition, however, carried Jerome, the teacher of Christians and the bane of ancient and modern Vigilantians in the letters of the second and third books, into the nineteenth century. Schulting's confessionalized Jerome, transformed into a *summa* of Catholic truth, was unabashedly theological.

Despite its attractiveness, the classification of Jerome's letters evinced its own difficulties. Lelli may have prided himself on providing the antidote to the confusion in medieval codices, a disorder that was not as universal as he supposed, yet he did not completely eradicate classificatory confusion. Erasmus, like Lelli, knew that some of Jerome's works resisted easy categorization. Did Erasmus' failure to create a perfectly coherent epistolary sequence symbolize a protest against a more complex taxonomy? The detailed approaches of Lelli and Brielis betrayed imperfections. Later in the sixteenth century,

¹⁶³ CCSL 79: 222*.

Canisius, despite revisions to his less precise system, could not evade problems of placement.

Early modern editorial struggles and flaws might dispose modern scholars to accept Antin's criticism of the arbitrary nature of detailed taxonomies and his predilection for chronology. Yet the theological imperative in classification showed that editors and the literate cultures that they sought to serve and guide were interested in a Jerome who was more than just a life lived. If Christian scholarship stood in need of his letters and Christendom was greatly indebted to him, then it made sense to put a Christian construction on his letters, separating, as Erasmus would add, the authentic from the counterfeit. Classification was as much about the assertion of identity as the logical distribution of texts. Renaissance editors revealed the staying power of Jerome's self-fashioning in the *De viris illustribus* as they perpetuated and enhanced the image of himself that he propagated for contemporaries and ultimately for posterity. Editors and printers asserted Jerome's identity not only through more or less elaborate schemes of classification but also through the inclusion of literary and visual portraits.

CHAPTER THREE

PORTRAYING JEROME

Erasmus, Biographer and Hagiographer

Ferdinand Cavallera began his study of Jerome, published in 1922, with a complaint. Although Jerome in his biographies and eulogies preserved the memory of many of his contemporaries, none of his contemporaries left any trace of him. Augustine had Possidius, Melania (d. 439) Gerontius, but no one who knew Jerome wrote his biography, and no Gregory of Nazianzus (d. 389), who taught Jerome, sang his praises. The oldest *vitae Hieronymi* came late and were the stuff of legend.¹ What a “bizarre fate,” observed Benedetto Clausi, for someone who established the rules for writing the lives of the saints and who left to posterity a considerable literary *monumentum* concerning himself. After centuries of silence, the first biographers drew from Jerome’s writings only fragments, confusingly arranged and filled with legends and edifying justifications.² Even if, as we shall see, Cavallera’s claim that the oldest *vitae* were the stuff of legend does not apply universally, Erasmus might have echoed this complaint. His *vita* represents, according to Cavallera, “the first serious effort at extricating the biography of Jerome from the legends or errors that had accumulated in the old lives and had been popularized by the work of Giovanni d’Andrea.”³

Erasmus’ biography of Jerome was the first of three patristic *vitae* that he composed. The other two were of John Chrysostom and of Origen, which appeared, respectively, in 1530 and 1536 in Erasmus’

¹ Ferdinand Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme: sa vie et son oeuvre*, 2 vols. (Louvain: “Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense” Bureaux, and Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion [et] Édouard Champion, 1922), 1: v.

² Benedetto Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre: L’edizione erasmiana delle Lettere di Gerolamo* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2000), 106-107.

³ Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 1: v, 2: 145.

editions of their collected works in Latin translation.⁴ Although the *Vita Hieronymi* appeared separately in a pirated edition printed by Eucharius Cervicornus in Cologne in 1517 and in another edition printed by Johann Froben in 1519, its true home was in the edition of Jerome, where it underwent revisions until the fourth edition of 1536-1537.⁵ Placed at the front of the first volume, it served as a preface to Jerome's letters, on which Erasmus drew to reconstruct Jerome's biography. The biography consists of three main parts: an introduction which lays out Erasmus' methodological approach, a chronological account of Jerome's life, and a defence against Jerome's critics.⁶

Scholarship has consistently praised Erasmus' biography as an unprecedented historical accomplishment. For Peter Bietenholz the entire edition of Jerome as well as the biography, an "historical essay of singular vigour and value," signalled Erasmus' intent "to set forth a model of philological and historical veracity." The *Vita Hieronymi* deserves to be called "the first scholarly biography of a Church Father."⁷ J. Coppens pointed to Erasmus' efforts at creating "a duly historical portrait of his favourite author."⁸ This "biographical masterpiece" demonstrated, according to John Maguire, "adherence to historical fact, realistic insight into the means of both discovering and presenting character, sophisticated use of letters and other sources" and an "artistic use of the rhetorical biographical form."⁹ Eugene Rice affirmed that Erasmus' "life of Jerome...is a saint's life

⁴ *D. Ioannis Chrysostomi archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opera* (Basel: Froben, 1530), A2v-B2r = LB 3/2: 1332C-1347C; *Origenis Adamantii eximii scripturarum interpretis opera*, 2 vols. (Basel: Froben, 1536), 1: α4r-α6v (*vita Origenis*), α6v-β1r (*de doctrina et libris eius*), β1r-β6r (*censurae*) = LB 8: 425A-440A.

⁵ Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre*, 95; *Erasmii Opuscula: A Supplement to the Opera Omnia*, ed. Wallace K. Ferguson (1933; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1978), 131-33.

⁶ John C. Olin, "Erasmus and Saint Jerome: The Close Bond and its Significance," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 7 (1987): 43-44.

⁷ Peter G. Bietenholz, *History and Biography in the Work of Erasmus of Rotterdam* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), 91; "Erasmus von Rotterdam und der Kult des Heiligen Hieronymus," in *Poesis et Pictura: Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild in Handschriften und alten Drucken, Festschrift für Dieter Wuttke zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Stephan Füssel and Joachim Knappe (Baden-Baden: Verlag Valentin Koerner, 1989), 191.

⁸ J. Coppens, "Le portrait de saint Jérôme d'après Érasme," in *Colloquia Erasmiana Turonensia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 2: 822.

⁹ John B. Maguire, "Erasmus' Biographical Masterpiece: *Hieronymi Stridonensis Vita*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 26 (1973): 266.

written to an unprecedented standard of accuracy and critical skepticism." This "is a work of history, not fiction," and to write it Erasmus "reviewed the biographical tradition, winnowing out accumulated error, denouncing legendary elaboration, and reordering the facts that remained in a plausible chronological order."¹⁰ This "first critical biography," John Olin wrote, "affords a prime example of the development of modern historical method within the context of Renaissance humanism."¹¹

Erasmus announces his methodology at the outset, which, in André Godin's view, confers on him "a pioneering role in the history of the literary genre of biography."¹² He is aware of the tradition of fabricating stories for the purpose of teaching how to lead an honest and pious life, of inspiring the idle to honourable pursuits, of lending support to the weak, of terrifying the ungodly, or "of celebrating with miracles the glory of holy persons." Plato, Origen, and others saw some value in these pious fictions, but Erasmus, like Augustine, did not. These were the delight of the common crowd who preferred fiction to fact. If legends (*fabulamenta*) must make their way into "our books," let them at least be the work of an "extraordinary and skillful craftsman," someone who can lie cleverly. The best liar is most disposed to telling the truth, according to Socrates, who considered an artist's task to say what is most certain and completely false. Herodotus and Xenophon proceeded along these lines not to produce reliable history but an exemplar of a just prince. Homer must have had the same idea in his "ocean of fables." This justification for fiction fails to convince Erasmus, however. The above-mentioned practitioners, despite their genius and eloquence, have a detrimental effect on human beings "when they devise and set forth a bad model of virtue." Erasmus prefers to portray the saints just as they were. Even their mistakes can be transformed into examples of piety.¹³

After dismissing miracle and other fantastical stories about Jerome, Erasmus charts a more reliable course for a biography. He researched the works of Prosper of Aquitaine, Sulpicius Severus, Paulus Orosius,

¹⁰ Eugene F. Rice, Jr., *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 130.

¹¹ John C. Olin, "Erasmus and Saint Jerome: The Close Bond and its Significance," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 7 (1987): 43.

¹² André Godin, "Érasme biographe patristique: *Hieronymi Stridonensis vita*," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 50 (1988): 694.

¹³ *Erasmi Opuscula*, 134-36.

and Rufinus, but most of all he investigated Jerome through Jerome's own books, "for who could know Jerome more accurately than Jerome himself? Or who could portray him more faithfully?" After reviewing all of Jerome's writings, Erasmus converted his scattered notes into a narrative.¹⁴ The methodology of *Hieronymus ex Hieronymo* was already evident in the biography's title: *The Life of the Excellent Doctor Jerome of Strido Composed Primarily from His Own Writings by Erasmus of Rotterdam*.¹⁵ Erasmus asserted that he fabricated nothing since he held that Jerome, expressing himself to us in his many distinguished works, was himself a "great miracle." Those who cannot do without amazing tales of miracles should read Jerome's books in which there were as many miracles as opinions.¹⁶

Of course, even a casual reading of the biography reveals that it is "not the product of a detached, disinterested observer."¹⁷ Erasmus was determined to defend Jerome, his hero, "in the face of all opposition."¹⁸ He chastises the Florentine humanist Pietro Crinito (1475-1507) for telling the "impious and silly story" that the Greek scholar Theodore Gaza (1400-ca. 1476) had commented that Jerome was undeservedly beaten for being a Ciceronian, no doubt because he was not Ciceronian enough. Towards the end of the biography, Erasmus quarrels, needlessly it seems, with other humanists—Lorenzo Valla (1407-1457), Filippo Beroaldo the Elder (1453-1505), and Battista Pio (ca. 1460-1540)—for challenging Jerome on a particular point of, respectively, etymology, word usage, and translation.¹⁹

Erasmus' sensitivity to criticisms of Jerome surely relates to the investment of his own *persona* in Jerome. Jacques Chomarat challenged, however, the notion that Erasmus' portrayal of Jerome was a reflection of his own life, holding that he sought to imitate Jerome's piety and scholarship. While Jerome was undoubtedly Erasmus' exemplar, Chomarat's argument that the chronology of Erasmus' career disqualified the merging of the biographies of Jerome and Erasmus is flawed. True enough, Erasmus conceived of the project

¹⁴ Ibid., 138-39.

¹⁵ Ibid., 134. After 1516, the reference to Erasmus disappeared from the title.

¹⁶ Ibid., 139.

¹⁷ Maguire, "Erasmus' Biographical Masterpiece," 271.

¹⁸ Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 2: 146.

¹⁹ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 182, 187-90. Erasmus comments on the style of Crinito, Gaza, Valla, Beroaldo, and Pio in the *Ciceronianus*: ASD I-2: 663-67. I have taken their dates from CEBR.

to edit Jerome before his literary career began, but he was already “the author of the *Adages*, of the *Enchiridion*, of the *Praise of Folly*” before the publication, and most likely before the composition, of the *Vita Hieronymi*.²⁰ Writing some forty years before Chomarat, Denys Gorce coined the verb *érasmiser* to describe how Erasmus approached Jerome: “our humanist, enamoured of his hero, also at times makes him into the image and likeness of Erasmus (*l’érasmise*)... projecting upon him his own feelings.”²¹ According to Rice, Erasmus’ “portrait of Jerome is a self-portrait, that of a Christian scholar attractively but disconcertingly Erasmian in attitude and personality.” This should come as no surprise since it is human nature to resurrect the dead, as it were, so as to enlist persons from the past as allies for a present agenda. While Anna Morisi Guerra recognized that every reconstruction of the past bears the stamp of its architect, she regarded Erasmus’ biography as “downright shamelessly autobiographical.”²² Godin shared this revulsion. The idealization of ancient monasticism in Erasmus’ “autobiographical sketch” represented a transparent criticism of monastic life in the sixteenth century.²³

Despite the near agreement about the autobiographical element in Erasmus’ *Vita Hieronymi*, one should not push this too far. The relationship between Erasmus and Jerome might resemble a *communicatio idiomatum*. Erasmus may have refashioned Jerome in his own image and likeness because he allowed Jerome to refashion him. His hero appropriated the *persona* of Origen to promote himself as an acclaimed Christian man of letters until the advent of the Origenist controversy in the early 390s compelled him to distance himself from the Alexandrian theologian. Erasmus appropriated the *persona* of Jerome to accomplish the same goal, namely to take his place as the pre-eminent Christian scholar in the humanist republic of letters.²⁴

²⁰ Jacques Chomarat, “La *Hieronymi Stridonensis Vita* d’Érasme,” *Helmantica* 50 (1999): 110-11.

²¹ Denys Gorce, “La patristique dans la réforme d’Érasme,” in *Festgabe Joseph Lortz*, 2 vols., ed. Erwin Iserloh and Peter Manns (Baden-Baden: Bruno Grimm, 1958), 1: 270.

²² Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 132-33; Anna Morisi Guerra, “La leggenda di san Girolamo: temi e problemi tra umanesimo e controriforma,” *Clio* 23 (1987): 22.

²³ Godin, “Érasme biographe patristique,” 700-701.

²⁴ Mark Vessy, “Jerome’s Origen: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*,” *Studia Patristica* 28 (1993): 137-45; Mark Vessey, “Erasmus’ Jerome: The Publishing

Furthermore, one can with Mark Vessey think of the extent to which the biography “was in fact designed as an *anti*-biography, as a deterrent to would-be edifying accounts of the lives, deaths, afterlives, and posthumous miracles of holy men who—and this is the key point—have left writings of their own.” Erasmus’ *Vita Hieronymi* “offers neither an icon for contemplation nor ‘self-portrait’ miraculously rendered by Jerome in the ensemble of his writings.”²⁵

The historical Jerome was never simply Jerome for Erasmus the biographer. The title, in which readers are introduced to the “excellent doctor” (*eximius doctor*), already makes this clear. Erasmus similarly invokes Jerome’s authority by referring to him within the text as “the incomparable doctor of the Church” and the “illustrious (*inclitus*) doctor of the Church.”²⁶ He was, furthermore, an “excellent man,” a “most prudent man,” a “most excellent man.”²⁷ The illustrious teacher, the superlative man was, as Erasmus often reminds his readers, a saint—*Divus Hieronymus*. He was not merely *vir sanctus*, but *vir sanctissimus*.²⁸ The biography doubles as hagiography. Erasmus’ identification with an idealized Jerome constitutes his own contribution to the cult of the saint, even if the “specious arguments and glaring falsehoods” employed to minimize the unpleasant side of Jerome’s character made Godin think that they signalled a relapse into the “ruts of medieval hagiography” rejected in the biography’s introduction.²⁹

The *Vita Hieronymi* constitutes not, as Rice would have it, so much “a turning point in Renaissance hagiography,”³⁰ as part of a continuum, even a culmination, of Quattrocento humanist hagiography. Although Italian humanists did not conform to a single paradigm of narrating the lives of saints, certain features are representative. Humanists like Maffeo Vegio (1407-1458) called attention to the learning and eloquence of saints. They paid relatively little attention

of a Christian Author,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 14 (1994): 77.

²⁵ Mark Vessey, “Erasmus’ Lucubrations and the Renaissance Life of Texts,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 24 (2004): 27.

²⁶ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 134, 141, 152.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 160, 163, 166.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 136, 163, 164 (*Divus Hieronymus*); 165 (*vir sanctus*); 164 (*vir sanctissimus*); 138, 157, 168 (*sanctissimus vir*).

²⁹ Bietenholz, “Erasmus von Rotterdam,” 209-210; Godin, “Érasme biographe patristique,” 702 (quotations).

³⁰ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 130.

to miracle stories and sought to base their narratives on reliable sources. Many scorned Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*; Lorenzo Valla would not tolerate the inclusion of legends in the lives of saints. The contemporary state of hagiography troubled Raffaele Maffei (1451-1522). He believed that panegyric was an inapposite rhetorical vehicle for writing about the saints. If writers celebrated the perfection of the saintly dead, how could the living succeed in imitating them? In combining history and panegyric, Erasmus' life of Jerome achieved a goal that had eluded humanists for a century.³¹

Erasmus' programme of *Hieronymus ex Hieronymo* was not unique or unprecedented. It belonged to a long-standing biographical tradition that revealed Jerome through his writings and that, like Erasmus, celebrated Jerome as a great Christian scholar. Erasmus in effect revived the tradition after the hiatus caused by three medieval forgeries that sought Jerome's glory not in his writings but in contrived miracle stories. By redirecting the attention of his readers to the writings as miraculous he not only indulged in a humanist idealization of Jerome but prepared readers for approaching Jerome's literary remains in accordance with this idealization.

From Hieronymus Noster to Hieronymus Gloriosus

Jerome, of course, was the first source for information about his life. The autobio-bibliographical entry with which Jerome concluded his *De viris illustribus* mentions that his father's name was Eusebius and that he was born in Strido, which the Goths had conquered and was once on the border of Dalmatia and Pannonia. Biographers repeated this scrap of information in the ensuing centuries. The rest of the entry, as we saw in Chapter 2, lists his writings. It substantiates Vessey's claim: "No Latin writer before Petrarch had a finer sense than Jerome of his own life as a work of art."³²

Jerome's desire to be known as an illustrious Christian writer first attained fulfillment in the *Chronicle* of Marcellinus Comes (Count

³¹ Diana Webb, "Eloquence and Education: A Humanist Approach to Hagiography," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31 (1980): 28-39; Alison Knowles Frazier, *Possible Lives: Authors and Saints in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 18, 24, 26, 57, 61-62, 293, 312-13.

³² Mark Vessey, "Jerome and Rufinus," in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frances M. Young, Lewis Ayres, and Andrew Louth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 319.

Marcellinus). The author was an aristocrat from the Roman prefecture of Illyricum who composed his *Chronicle* in the middle of the sixth century in Constantinople. Some 230 years before Marcellinus, Jerome, also in Constantinople, had completed his translation and revision of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius with a continuation until the year 378. Marcellinus took up where Jerome left off, giving an account of events in the imperial world from 379 to 518 and then to 534 in a second edition.³³ The entry on Jerome appears for the year 392 in the *Chronicle*, coinciding with the composition of the *De viris illustribus*. Marcellinus' record of Jerome appeared as a prologue to only a few manuscripts of Gennadius' continuation of the *De viris illustribus*.³⁴

Both in his preface and in his entry on Jerome, one of the longest in the *Chronicle*,³⁵ Marcellinus writes of *noster Hieronymus* or *Hieronymus noster*, appropriating him for himself and for Christendom a millennium before Erasmus. "Our Jerome," Marcellinus begins the entry on the Church Father, "especially skilled in Greek and Latin literature in Rome, was also ordained a priest there."³⁶ Here is the first error that persisted throughout the Middle Ages, namely that Jerome was ordained in Rome. In fact, Bishop Paulinus of Antioch ordained him in 378 or 379, granting Jerome's wish to be free of pastoral and liturgical obligations.³⁷ By publishing countless biblical commentaries, Marcellinus avers, he rendered "the citadel of the Catholic Church immovable against the darts of traitors." The grammatical connection between, on the one hand, a subordinate clause mentioning Jerome's advocacy of and adherence to virginity and penance for sins and, on the other, the principal clause declaring Jerome's prestige of being the only Latin writer to comment on all sixteen Old Testament prophets may be a clumsy one, but the sentence combines two aspects of the same man: his ardent asceticism and his dedication

³³ Brian Croke, ed. and trans., *The Chronicle of Marcellinus: A Translation and Commentary* (Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1995), xix; Stefan Rebenich, *Jerome* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 27-29, 75.

³⁴ Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 2: 137; Ernest Cushing Richardson, ed., *Hieronymus, liber de viris illustribus*; Gennadius, *liber de viris illustribus* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1896), 57, printed the prologue based on a seventh- and a thirteenth-century manuscript.

³⁵ Croke, *Chronicle of Marcellinus*, 1, 5, 62.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 5. The translation is my own.

³⁷ Alfons Fürst, *Hieronymus: Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 2003), 29, 145.

to Christian erudition. To Catholic readers Jerome revealed himself to be an authoritative *interpres*—a biblical translator and exegete—and a tireless writer of a vast collection of letters.³⁸

The dependence on Marcellinus of a biography written no later than the middle of the ninth century is obvious.³⁹ Both texts share the same *incipit*: *Hieronymus noster*, and the biography borrows several passages from the *Chronicle*. Cavallera rightly describes the biography as “an amplification of the notice by Marcellinus...with the help, above all, of the works of Jerome himself.”⁴⁰ After a brief reference to Jerome’s birth, education, and asceticism, *Hieronymus noster* quotes the lengthy passage from the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) about Jerome’s famous dream, to be discussed in greater detail below. The lesson to be drawn from the flogging that Jerome received for reading Cicero was that he should never open his books again.⁴¹ A brief quotation from the preface to the life of Malchus and a longer one to the same letter to Eustochium contribute to situating Jerome in the desert, a transition between studying under Gregory Nazianzus in Constantinople and settling in Bethlehem. Damasus’ letter asking Jerome to answer his exegetical questions (ep. 35) illustrates the pope’s encouragement of Jerome’s writing projects, and excerpts from the letter to Rusticus (ep. 125) and from the prefaces to Job and to Daniel prove Jerome’s singular proficiency in Hebrew and Chaldean.⁴² Naturally, there follows a discussion of Jerome’s accomplishments as a biblical translator and commentator. He wrote against Helvidius, Pelagius, and Jovinian, the Jerome who in the preface to his *Dialogue against the Pelagians* insisted that he had never spared heretics and that the enemies of the Church were his as well. A quotation from a letter to Augustine (ep. 102) helps bring the biography to an end: “We have had our time; we have run as well as we could. Now, while you run and traverse long distances, we deserve rest.” Yet this was the same Jerome who from Bethlehem

³⁸ Croke, *Chronicle of Marcellinus*, 5. The translation is my own.

³⁹ Alberto Vaccari, “Le antiche vite di S. Girolamo,” in Vaccari, *Scritti di erudizione e di filologia*, 2 vols. (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1952-1958), 2: 36, 38. Vaccari’s essay first appeared in *Miscellanea Geronimiana: scritti vari pubblicati nel XV centenario dalla morte di San Girolamo* (Rome: Tipografia poliglotta vaticana, 1920), 1-18. Subsequent references to the essay are from its later manifestation.

⁴⁰ Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 2: 137.

⁴¹ PL 22: 177.

⁴² PL 22: 179, 180, 181.

“for fifty-six years without any rest filled the world with his books.”⁴³

A *vita* with the incipit *Plerosque nimirum* was also the product of the ninth century. Alberto Vaccari was too severe in his assessment that its historical value was negligible, offering nothing but legends and errors.⁴⁴ *Plerosque nimirum* has survived in two recensions. Apart from the “small differences” to be expected in scribal transmissions, the second has interpolated two passages—one extensive, the other shorter—into the text of the original. The first of these quotes extensively from the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) for the account of Jerome’s dream and his experience of desert life; the second presents Jerome as the tireless defender of the faith, invoking the same passage from the *Dialogue against the Pelagians* as *Hieronymus noster*. Like *Hieronymus noster*, *Plerosque nimirum* borrows from Marcellinus; it also draws on John Cassian, Cassiodorus, and the *Acta* of the martyrs Nereus and Achileus. The last document helped the author defend Jerome from the criticism that he claimed that, despite God’s omnipotence, virginity once lost could not be restored.⁴⁵ Quotations from Jerome’s *Chronicle* and from his *Commentary on Isaiah* prove, respectively, that he was a pupil of the Roman rhetorician Victorinus and grammarian Donatus and of Gregory Nazianzus in Constantinople. The quotation from the *Chronicle* reproduced an incorrect variant reading since, as we shall see below, Victorinus did not teach Jerome.⁴⁶ In a letter to Pammachius and Oceanus (ep. 84), Jerome mentions his various teachers: Appolinaris in Alexandria, Didymus in Antioch, Baraninas in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. *Plerosque nimirum* cites the relevant passage to underline Jerome’s first-class education.⁴⁷ A passage from the letter to Desiderius (ep. 47) confirms that Jerome wrote the *De viris illustribus*. At the end of the *vita*, the unknown author quotes the same passage from ep. 102 as *Hieronymus noster* but does not mention that Jerome was addressing Augustine.⁴⁸ If Rice was correct in pointing out that *Hieronymus noster* and *Plerosque nimirum* are

⁴³ PL 22: 184; Jerome: CCSL 80: 4, CSEL 55: 236.

⁴⁴ Vaccari, “Le antiche vite,” 46.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 41-43; Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 2: 140; PL 22: 203-209.

⁴⁶ PL 22: 202; CCSL 73: 84 (reference to Gregory Nazianzus in the *Commentary on Isaiah*). For the reference to the *Chronicle*, see below, n. 130.

⁴⁷ PL 22: 202-203; Jerome: CSEL 55: 122.

⁴⁸ PL 22: 214.

entirely independent works,⁴⁹ then their similar conclusions must rely on some other, perhaps lost, source.

Plerosque nimirum has several important distinctive features, however. It begins by discussing the meaning of Jerome's name—sacred law. Was this a source for the opening of the entry on Jerome in the *Golden Legend* by Jacobus de Voragine (d. 1298), who commonly began a saint's life by pointing out the meaning of his or her name? When the ninth-century life refers to Jerome as a cardinal priest, it means a priest entitled "to perform liturgical functions in a parish or church other than the one in which he had been originally ordained."⁵⁰ With the passage of time the original meaning of the term was lost; Jerome became a cardinal, wearing in later medieval images the red hat (*galero*) and robe of the prelates who elected the pope.

Plerosque nimirum ends with a miracle story, the famous legend of Jerome and the lion. While he was expounding the Scriptures to his fellow monks, into the monastery at Bethlehem limped an enormous lion. The monks fled in terror, but Jerome approached the lion, who extended his wounded paw. Having called back the monks, Jerome instructed them to wash the wound and ascertain the cause of the limp. They discovered thorns in the paw. The *vita* does not say who removed the thorns; it merely notes that once the wound had received care, the lion recovered right away. Tame for service, the lion stayed at the monastery. The monks' donkey became his charge. One day, while the lion was sleeping, travelling merchants spirited away the donkey. The monks suspected that the lion had devoured the stolen animal, but the lion eventually regained his honour. Seeing the donkey pass by in the merchants' caravan, he roared loudly to draw attention to it and to the mercantile captors. These confessed their crime to Jerome.⁵¹

As a result of this story, the lion became Jerome's "inseparable companion" in literature and art.⁵² The legend's proximate source is a strikingly similar tale about a lion and St. Gerasimus, a monk who established a monastery in Palestine by the Jordan River. Johannes Moschus (d. 619), "yet another Palestinian hermit,"

⁴⁹ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 23.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 35.

⁵¹ PL 22: 210-12.

⁵² Vaccari, "Le antiche vite," 43.

recorded the story in Greek in his *Spiritual Meadow*. The author of *Plerosque nimirum* most likely never read the *Spiritual Meadow*, first translated into Latin in the fifteenth century. Rice conjectured that the story spread from Greek monks residing in Rome, that a Latin admirer of Jerome applied the story of Gerasimus to Geronimus, a Latin alternate for Hieronymus, and that the author of *Plerosque nimirum*, believing the story to have originated with pilgrims from Bethlehem, incorporated it into his life of Jerome.⁵³

Vaccari maintained that another early biography of Jerome came from the pen of Nicolò Maniacoria, a twelfth-century biblical scholar, who, inspired by Jerome, learned Hebrew from a Jewish teacher.⁵⁴ Information about him is imprecise. He lived in Rome. Was this in the first half of the twelfth century, as Vaccari noted, or the second half of the century, as André Wilmart suggested? At the beginning of his *Suffragenus bibliothecae*, he called himself a deacon of St. Damasus. Vaccari specified that this was the Church of San Lorenzo in Damaso. Was Maniacoria, again according to Wilmart, also a monk at the French Cistercian monastery of St. Athanasius in Trois-Fontaines?⁵⁵ We can be sure, since he says so in his *vita*, that he attributed his devotion to Jerome to the saint's having rescued his mother from death while she carried him in her womb.⁵⁶

Maniacoria seems to have read more of Jerome than any other biographer, quoting from the *De viris illustribus*, the third book of Jerome's polemic against Rufinus, from the prefaces to the commentaries on Job and Daniel, from the letters to Pammachius and Oceanus (ep. 84), to Rusticus (ep. 125), from Damasus (ep. 35), to Damasus (ep. 16), to Mark (ep. 17), to Eustochium on virginity (ep. 22), to Pammachius on the death of his wife Paulina (ep. 66), to the mother and daughter residing in Gaul (ep. 117), to Asella (ep. 45), to Eustochium on the life of Paula (ep. 108), to Desiderius (ep. 47), to Augustine (ep. 102) and from Augustine (ep. 110). He referred to the letter to Paulinus of Nola (ep. 53), the *Life of Malchus*, the spurious sermon on the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and the polemics

⁵³ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 44-45.

⁵⁴ Vaccari, "Le antiche vite," 47; Aryeh Grabois, "The *Hebraica Veritas* and Jewish-Christian Intellectual Relations in the Twelfth Century," *Speculum* 50 (1975): 628.

⁵⁵ Vaccari, "Le antiche vite," 47; André Wilmart, "Nicolas Manjacoria, cistercien à Trois-Fontaines," *Revue bénédictine* 33 (1931): 137, 138.

⁵⁶ PL 22: 185.

against Jovinian and Helvidius, and identified Jerome's various writings, including his scriptural commentaries.⁵⁷ Towards the end of the *vita*, Maniacoria asked: Who can read as much as Jerome wrote?⁵⁸

What was novel about Maniacoria's reading was his attention to Jerome's relationship with women, a topic that until recently scholarship has addressed in only a limited way.⁵⁹ Seeing him toil in defence of the faith, Paula came to his help. For their devotion to him Jerome remembered Eustochium and Paula her mother in his writings and provided them with a knowledge of Scripture. He consoled Paula on the death of her daughters Blesilla and Paulina. Here Maniacoria got it half-right. Jerome indeed wrote to Paula on the death of Blesilla (ep. 39), but, according to the epistolary record, the consolation that he offered on the death of Paulina he addressed to Pammachius her husband (ep. 66). Inspired by Jerome, Paula, accompanied by Eustochium, left behind the Roman Babylon and journeyed to the Holy Land, where Paula built in Bethlehem monasteries put under Jerome's supervision. Maniacoria quotes much of the letter to Asella (ep. 45) in which Jerome defends himself against charges of impropriety with the women he frequented and praised Paula's religious fervour.⁶⁰

While Maniacoria's Jerome was primarily a Christian author, he inherited other characteristics from *Plerosque nimirum*. He made his way through the various ranks of the Church until he attained the dignity of the cardinalate. A cardinal priest, his titular church was that of St. Anastasia in Rome.⁶¹ Jerome was no longer the cardinal priest as this was understood in the ninth century. The sort of cardinal Maniacoria had in mind was the prelate who advised and elected popes.⁶² The new cardinal remained the monk in Bethlehem who fearlessly cared for his legendary lion.⁶³

Vincent of Beauvais (d. ca. 1264), the most eminent medieval encyclopediast, compiled a good deal of material on Jerome in Book 16 of his *Speculum historiale*, a component of the monumental *Speculum*

⁵⁷ For the listed writings, see PL 22: 189, 196.

⁵⁸ PL 22: 199.

⁵⁹ Patrick Laurence, *Jérôme et le nouveau modèle féminine: La conversion à la "vie parfaite"* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1997), 11-12.

⁶⁰ PL 22: 186, 194-96.

⁶¹ PL 22: 183, 192.

⁶² Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 37.

⁶³ PL 22: 193-94.

maius. The compilation is for the most part an Hieronymian florilegium with excerpts from several letters. An opening chapter (16.18) presents some biographical information, none of which is new. Jerome was consummately skilled in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. He wore a monk's habit for a long time and preserved his virginity for ever. His sanctity inhered principally in his mental purity and physical self-restraint. Vincent devotes most of the chapter to the story of the lion. A subsequent chapter lists Jerome's writings (16.19). Three chapters on St. Firminus interrupt Vincent's treatment of Jerome. These are followed by a chapter (16.93) that tells of Jerome's edition of the psalter and by an excerpt from the *Life of Malchus* (16.94), the final installment on Jerome.⁶⁴

The section on Jerome in the *Golden Legend* is highly derivative. Jacobus gives his father's name and place of birth and relates that he studied under Donatus and Victorinus. A concise summary of Jerome's dream leads to the conclusion that after the dream "he read the books of Scripture with as much zeal as he had ever read the books of pagans."⁶⁵ Jacobus does not say whether Jerome abandoned the pagan classics. Following earlier *vitae*, the famous medieval hagiographer quoted a long passage from ep. 22 to illustrate Jerome's tribulations in the desert. Jerome was a cardinal priest. Jacobus tells the story of how Jerome's Roman opponents humiliated him. They put a woman's dress by his bed. When Jerome rose for matins, he put it on, thinking that it was his own garment, and went off to church. Maniacoria told the same story, using it to explain Jerome's departure from Rome, and so does Jacobus, but more concisely.⁶⁶ Jacobus devotes much more space to the story of the lion.

Two features distinguish Jacobus' account from earlier *vitae*. First, he mentions Jerome's legendary reputation for virginity only to undermine it with a quotation from the apology for the *Adversus Jovinianum* addressed to Pammachius (ep. 49): "I exalt virginity to

⁶⁴ I consulted an unfoliated edition of the *Speculum historiale* printed at the monastery of St. Ulrich and St. Afra in Augsburg in 1474. See W. A. Copinger, *Supplement to Hain's Repertorium Bibliographicum*, 2 parts (London: Henry Sotheran and Co., 1895-1902), 2/2: 188-89, no. 6247. On Vincent of Beauvais, see *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, 13 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982-1989), 12: 453-455, s. v. "Vincent of Beauvais," by Gregory G. Guzman.

⁶⁵ Iacopo da Varazze (Jacobus de Voragine), *Legenda aurea*, 2 vols., ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni (Florence: SISMEL—Edizioni del Galluzzo, 1998), 2: 1003-1004.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 2: 1004; PL 22: 186.

heaven not because I have it, but since I admire all the more what I do not have.”⁶⁷ Whether the invocation of Jerome against the legend was out of character for an author who, according to Rice, was “generally so reluctant to sacrifice edification to evidence” or represented a general tendency that David Collins identified as “a drive for critical accuracy,” Jacobus anticipated by more than two centuries Erasmus’ observation in his *Vita*, also citing the letter to Pam-machius, that Jerome himself indicated that he was not a virgin.⁶⁸ Second, Jacobus supplies a series of testimonies. Quotations from Augustine, Prosper of Aquitaine, Isidore of Seville, and Sulpicius Severus acclaim Jerome’s learning and thus preserve his status as a Christian scholar. His reputation did not always enjoy universal esteem. The last word goes to Jerome, who in the letter to Asella (ep. 45) faces down his persecutors, ready to suffer for Christ and for heavenly reward.⁶⁹

A trio of forgeries departed from the documentary tradition of portraying Jerome, not surprisingly since their focus was his death and *Nachleben*, for which no historically reliable sources could be available. The forgeries purport to be a long letter on the death of Jerome—*De morte Hieronymi*—by Eusebius of Cremona, Jerome’s disciple and friend, to Bishop Damasus of Porto and a Roman senator called Theodosius, a shorter letter from Augustine to Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem on the splendours of Jerome—*De magnificentiis beati Hieronymi*, and Cyril’s long reply to Augustine on the miracles Jerome performed after his death—*De miraculis Hieronymi*. Cyril could not possibly have written the letter, for he died in 386, some thirty years before Jerome. Pseudo-Eusebius relates that Cyril saw the “glorious soul of Jerome” enter heaven, Pseudo-Augustine refers to the letter of Pseudo-Eusebius, and Pseudo-Cyril tells the story of Eusebius’

⁶⁷ Iacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, 2: 1005: *Virginitatem in celo prefero, non quia habeo, sed quia magis miror quod non habeo*. Isidore Hilberg (CSEL 54: 385) established a slightly different reading: *uirinigatem autem in caelum fero, non quia habeo, sed quia miror, quod non habeo*.

⁶⁸ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 47; David J. Collins, “A Life Reconstituted: Jacobus de Voragine, Erasmus of Rotterdam, and Their Lives of Jerome,” *Medievalia et Humanistica*, n.s., 25 (1998): 39. Whereas Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 48, took notice of Jacobus’ remark, Collins did not. For Erasmus, see *Erasmi Opuscula*, 172.

⁶⁹ Iacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, 2: 1008-1009.

death and of Jerome's appearance to comfort him at his last hour.⁷⁰ The three texts are a deliberate ensemble, therefore.

Rice maintained that the fictitious letters probably originated in the early fourteenth century from the circle of clergy at the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, where the association with Bethlehem and thus with Jerome was strong since the basilica claimed to possess the crib of Christ. The author seems to have been either a Dominican or close to the Order of Preachers. Pseudo-Cyril reports Jerome's prediction that his remains will eventually be reinterred in Rome.⁷¹ This is an allusion, according to Rice, to a forged text from the 1290s, the *Translatio corporis beati Hieronymi*, which tells the story of Jerome's command to a monk living in the East to disinter his bones in Bethlehem and transport them to Rome in order to rebury them at Santa Maria Maggiore, where visual representations of the saint are first attested in the second half of the thirteenth century.⁷² Erika Bauer, however, assigned an earlier origin to the letters. In her view, they dated back to the twelfth or more probably to the early thirteenth century.⁷³

Regardless of when they were first written, the promotion of the cult of Jerome was one of the key objectives of the letters. Pseudo-Cyril regularly refers to Jerome as glorious or most glorious. Indeed, in the early fourteenth century the title *doctor gloriosus* emerged as the most frequently employed epithet for the saint.⁷⁴ The forger displayed little interest in the historical Jerome. Unlike the previous *vitae*, the letters never mention his birthplace. Only Pseudo-Eusebius quotes from Jerome, and that only once. He passes over in silence the various forms of suffering that Jerome endured, allowing him to speak for himself in the often quoted passage from ep. 22.⁷⁵ That Jerome was in Rome and went to Gregory of Nazianzus receives a brief mention in the letter of Pseudo-Eusebius.⁷⁶ He and Pseudo-

⁷⁰ PL 22: 275-76, 282, 283, 290-96.

⁷¹ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 63.

⁷² Ibid., 55-56; Giovanni Biasotti, "Le memorie di S. Girolamo in Santa Maria Maggiore di Roma," in *Miscellanea Geronimiana*, 237.

⁷³ Erika Bauer, "De morte Hieronymi: Johann von Neumarkt und die 'Hieronymus-Briefe,'" *Analecta Cartusiana* 117 (1987): 31. See also Bauer, ed., *Heinrich Hallers Übersetzung der 'Hieronymus-Briefe'* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Carl Winter, 1984), 20*.

⁷⁴ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 49-50.

⁷⁵ PL 22: 242-43.

⁷⁶ PL 22: 243-44.

Augustine esteem Jerome's expertise as a translator. The latter emphasizes Jerome's learning. If Jerome was ignorant about something in human nature, no one ever knew it.⁷⁷

The bulk of the *De morte Hieronymi* consists of a deathbed discourse, a long and disorganized sermon that Jerome preaches to his fellow monks. That a dying man could hold forth at great length seems a miracle, but Pseudo-Eusebius does not say this. The sermon includes, among other things, a critique of bad pastors, a diatribe against the accumulation of wealth, discussions of mercy, love, prayer, and death. He interrupts his deathbed prayer to instruct the monks to bury him naked. The long prayer resumes and ends in time for Jerome to receive communion and pray the *Nunc dimittis*. A voice from heaven bids Jerome to come and accept his reward; Jerome tells Jesus that he is on his way. After his death, Jerome healed a blind man and cast out demons. A heretic who reviled Jerome turned into wood, and fire from heaven reduced him to ashes. In view of Jerome's holiness and of many manifest signs, a "multitude of heretics" returned to "the truth of the holy faith."⁷⁸ Pseudo-Eusebius showers Jerome with titles. He deserves to be called a martyr for the hardships he endured. Without a doubt he is a "prince of peace, a champion of justice, a teacher of truth and fairness, a shield-bearer of inviolate faith, a powerful warrior against heretics."⁷⁹ Jerome is an exemplary saint: his "most holy life is instruction for all. His virtues (*mores*) are the precepts of all the faithful."⁸⁰

Pseudo-Augustine celebrates Jerome as a second Elijah, Samuel, and John the Baptist. For five years in the desert the "most glorious hermit" let no wine or spirits, flesh or fish pass his lips. He ate no cooked food except on two occasions when he was very ill.⁸¹ Two apparitions dominate the account of the *De magnificentiis*. In the first, Jerome's recently departed soul came to Augustine's assistance as he pondered whether the souls of the blessed could desire what they could not obtain. For several hours "that most glorious soul" discussed with Augustine "the unity of the most holy Trinity, the triune

⁷⁷ PL 22: 241, 283.

⁷⁸ PL 22: 245-65 (deathbed discourse), 267-75 (deathbed events), 276-77 (miracles).

⁷⁹ PL 22: 242, 278.

⁸⁰ PL 22: 277.

⁸¹ PL 22: 282.

nature of the unity, the generation of the Son by the Father, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, the hierarchies and ranks of the angels and the mysteries of their blessed spirits, also the joys of the blessed souls, and other useful and important things for human beings to understand.”⁸² To confirm his experience of Jerome’s apotheosis, Pseudo-Augustine notes that Sulpicius Severus and three companions heard a voice from heaven that proclaimed that Christ the Lord had welcomed into his kingdom the soul of “the most glorious priest Jerome,” a soul superior to others in honour, excellence, and sublimeness as it outshone others “in the merits of a more sublime and holier life.” This sets the stage for Pseudo-Augustine to argue that Jerome is equal in dignity to John the Baptist and the apostles. Jerome appears again, this time with John the Baptist, who does the talking. He asserts that Jerome is his equal in holiness and glory. Among the saints glory is without gradation. John has come to proclaim the “glory of Jerome” to Augustine so that he may broadcast it to the nations. He needs to know that the honour and reverence afforded an individual saint belongs to all the others too.⁸³

Jerome makes several posthumous appearances in the *De miraculis*. He comforts Eusebius of Cremona as he lies dying. Twice he rescues Sylvanus, the holy Archbishop of Nazareth: once from the executioner’s sword and once from a mob that wanted to put him to death. At Constantinople he intervenes to save from the executioner two young men, innocent of the accusations of murder levelled at them. Jerome appears three times to a devout nun at a monastery in Thebes, ordering her to warn her abbess and consœurs that they should either desist from the simoniacal practice of charging money for recruits or suffer the wrath of God. The other nuns mock her each time she relays Jerome’s message. As soon as the holy nun leaves the building, it collapses; all the other nuns die. In Candia on Crete, a licentious priest died and was buried with other priests. In protest, a din arose from the church’s cemetery, and everything in the church was overturned and burned. Prayers for divine mercy and help were ineffectual. While the congregation prays in the church, glorious Jerome appears, seven times more brilliant than the sun. He goes to

⁸² PL 22: 285.

⁸³ PL 22: 286, 288.

the altar and remains there for about an hour. Then he orders the congregation to exhume and set fire to the body of the wretched priest, destined for hell.⁸⁴

Pseudo-Cyril bears witness to the power of Jerome's image. An Arian heretic spies an image of glorious Jerome in a church and addresses it: "If only I had thus taken you in my hands while you were alive, for I would have cut your throat with my sword." He unsheathes his sword and with all his force stabs the throat of the image. But he cannot remove the sword from the image or his hand from the sword. Blood begins to flow from the wound and, miraculously, the flow has never stopped. At the same hour, glorious Jerome appears with a sword stuck in his throat to a judge, demanding punishment for the crime. Arrested, the heretic shows no remorse and dies at the hands of a crowd. In another anecdote, Pseudo-Cyril tells of a beautiful and pious young nun, devoted to Jerome, who hardly ever left her cell. The devil fills a young man with lust for her. Unable to obtain the object of his desire, he promises money to a sorcerer if he can help him. The sorcerer in turn calls upon a demon to make his way to the nun in the middle of the night. An image of Jerome painted in the cell frightens the demon away. The image stops another demon employed for the task, who begs Jerome with loud screams to let him go, promising never to return.⁸⁵

The three forgeries achieved a spectacular success. Almost four hundred Latin manuscripts survive. Vernacular versions also exist in manuscript, above all those produced in German-speaking lands and in the Low Countries. In the second half of the fourteenth century, Johann von Neumarkt, Bishop of Olmütz (Olomouc) and chancellor to Emperor Charles IV, translated the letters into German, and fifty-six manuscripts spread his translation. The translation of the Austrian Carthusian Heinrich Haller, completed a century later, had no heirs, however. A Dutch translation circulated in at least thirty manuscripts.⁸⁶

Reading the letters may have sparked Giovanni d'Andrea's devotion to Jerome.⁸⁷ He abridged them in the *Hieronymianus*. His omissions are instructive. The Jerome that emerges from Andrea's

⁸⁴ PL 22: 293-95, 299, 301-302, 305, 306-308, 314.

⁸⁵ PL 22: 308-309, 309-310.

⁸⁶ Bauer, "De morte Hieronymi," 31; *Heinrich Hallers Übersetzung*, 21*, 30*, 33*.

⁸⁷ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 64.

recensions is not the ascetic who has forsaken the world. Nor is he the critic of women, wayward priests, and irresponsible bishops. Instead, the Jerome who has survived the truncations is a more sociable figure, the pious Christian in harmony with God and the world who acts in order to prove himself worthy of divine grace and to win general approval from the world.⁸⁸

In Cologne, Ulrich Zell printed the *De morte Hieronymi* in 1470 (GW 9446). Konrad Mancz in Blaubergeren printed the first edition of all three letters in 1475 (GW 9447). Seven other incunabular editions of the letters in Latin followed. The one printed by Peregrino Pasquale and Dominicus Bertochus in Venice in 1485 began with the *Plerosque nimirum* (GW 9451). This must have been a popular way of promoting the cult of Jerome in Italy. All twenty fifteenth-century editions in Italian translation, from the one printed ca. 1471 in Venice (GW 9455) until the edition produced by Manfredus de Bonellis in 1498 in the same city (GW 9474), prefaced the three letters with the ninth-century biography. The *vita* in the *Golden Legend* paves the way for the three letters in the two Catalan translations printed in Barcelona in 1492 and 1493 (GW 9475, 9476). A Low German translation of the letters appeared in Lübeck in 1484 (GW 9477), a Dutch translation in Hasselt in 1490 (GW 9478) and three Castilian versions, one in Burgos in 1490 (GW 9479) and two in Zaragoza in 1492 and 1495 (GW 9480, 9481).

Promoting Jerome's cult in print with the three letters enjoyed a certain humanist resonance. In 1498, Guy Marchant printed them in Paris under the title *Transitus beati Hieronymi* (GW 9454). The Flemish humanist Josse Clichtove, whom the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* considers the editor, added a commendatory poem at the end of the volume, inviting those who love virtue and wisdom to read the letters. The little but highly appropriate book will spur readers on to virtue. To take Jerome as a rule and model for life means that he will clear a sure path to heaven. Another Parisian printer, Jean Petit, who was closely associated with Marchant, printed the *Transitus beati Hieronymi* twice early in the sixteenth century, ca. 1503 and ca.

⁸⁸ Erika Bauer, "Hieronymus und *Hieronymianus*: Johannes Andreae und der Hieronymuskult," *Daphnis* 18 (1989): 214.

1510.⁸⁹ The volume that I consulted also contained Clichtove's poem and added the *Plerosque nimirum* at the end of the volume.⁹⁰

In 1514, Lazarus Spengler, the city clerk of Nürnberg, published his German translation of the *De morte Hieronymi*, dedicating it to Hieronymus Ebner, a city councillor who belonged to the same local network of humanists as Spengler, Willibald Pirckheimer, and Albrecht Dürer.⁹¹ Another Jerome, Hieronymus Höltzel, printed the translation. Besides municipal and other official documents, Höltzel also printed in Nürnberg many of Luther's publications.⁹² In the dedicatory preface, Spengler reveals that the glorious, great St. Jerome was his specially chosen and beloved patron. These were not idle words. Spengler, who named his seventh child, born in 1512, Hieronymus, expressed the fascination with Jerome within the piety of several Nürnberg humanists, a piety that combined respect for Jerome the ascetic penitent with admiration for Jerome the eloquent Christian scholar. He explains the reason for publishing the translation: the beneficial and godly teaching and Christian precepts contained in the *De morte Hieronymi* would become available to the laity, many of whom were pious people and admirers of Jerome.⁹³

⁸⁹ Philippe Renouard, *Répertoire des imprimeurs parisiens: libraires, fondateurs de caractères et correcteurs d'imprimerie depuis l'introduction de l'Imprimerie à Paris (1470) jusqu'à la fin du seizième siècle*, ed. Jeanne Veyrin-Ferrer and Brigitte Moreau (Paris: M. J. Minard, 1965), 293; *Inventaire chronologique des éditions parisiennes du XVI^e siècle d'après les manuscrits de Philippe Renouard*, vol. 1: 1501-1510, ed. Brigitte Moreau (Paris: Imprimerie municipale, 1972), 99 no. 42, 363 no. 84.

⁹⁰ LMU, 4^o Inc. lat. 38: *Transitus beati Hieronymi* (Paris: Jean Petit, n.d.), 52r (poem), 53r [54r]—56r [58r] (*Plerosque nimirum*). The most comprehensive study of Clichtove remains Jean-Pierre Massaut, *Josse Clichtove, l'humanisme et la réforme du clergé*, 2 vols. (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1968). Massaut (1: 32, 104) identifies two editions of the *Transitus beati Hieronymi* printed by Marchant, dated 1488 and 1498, but a note at GW 9454 suggests that 1488 was a misprint in at least one copy.

⁹¹ Berndt Hamm, *Lazarus Spengler (1479-1534): Der Nürnberger Ratschreiber im Spannungsfeld von Humanismus und Reformation, Politik und Glaube* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 20-24.

⁹² Josef Benzing, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1982), 352.

⁹³ Erika Bauer, ed., *Lazarus Spengler als Übersetzer: (Ps.-)Eusebius, De morte Hieronymi, Nürnberg 1514* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Carl Winter, 1997), 81-82 (preface); Hamm, *Lazarus Spengler*, 102-106. See also Berndt Hamm, "Hieronymus-Begeisterung und Augustinismus vor der Reformation: Beobachtungen zur Beziehung zwischen Humanismus und Frömmigkeitstheologie (am Beispiel Nürnbergs)," in *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology (1300-1650): Essays Dedicated to Heiko Augustinus Oberman*

Except for the edition printed by Johannes Mentelin in Strassburg as late as 1469, all printed Latin collections of Jerome's letters featured the three forgeries. Teodoro de' Lelli deployed them at the end of his edition, where they also appeared in some fifteenth-century manuscript *epistolaria*, such as one completed in 1440 and another in the third quarter of the fifteenth century.⁹⁴ A hint of reluctance surfaces in Lelli's headnote to the letter of Pseudo-Eusebius. The editor included the *Transitus* that Eusebius, Jerome's disciple, wrote not so much with clarity but with devotion. The three forgeries also appeared at the end of Jerome's collected letters edited by Giovanni Andrea Bussi and Adrian Brielis. The editions that followed Bussi's revision of Lelli's classification naturally all concluded with the three letters.

In the Lellian *editio princeps*, Maniacoria's biography appears immediately before the letter of Pseudo-Eusebius. Only the edition printed by Antonio Miscomini in 1476 in Venice followed suit. Bussi's edition excluded the text but added as a sort of preface the *Plerosque nimirum*. Lelli appended another text relevant to the promotion of Jerome's cult to the second *tractatus* of the second part of his edition, printed at the end of the first volume. This was the eighth oration or sermon in praise of Jerome by Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder (d. 1444). All other incunabular editions of Jerome's letters, except for those printed by Mentelin and Peter Schoeffer and the edition printed by Nicolaus Kesler in 1497, imitated Lelli on this score.

A native of Capodistria (today Koper in Slovenia), Vergerio studied in Padua, Bologna, and Florence. From the last decade of the fourteenth century into the fifteenth century he observed Jerome's feast day, 30 September, usually with a panegyric sermon, "taking his message about Jerome into a variety of settings: churches, public squares, and monasteries."⁹⁵ Ten such sermons survive. Vergerio aimed at promoting Jerome as a champion of humanism. His Jerome "testified to the value of humanist learning for scriptural exegesis and for an authentically catholic piety." A miraculous element rep-

in *Honor of his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Kenneth Hagen (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990), 203-211.

⁹⁴ BSB, Clm. 2753, 354-466; Beinecke, Marston MS 199, 299r-328v.

⁹⁵ John M. McManamon, *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder: The Humanist as Orator* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1996), 122.

resents no more than a sidelight in the sermons.⁹⁶ In the seventh oration, Vergerio quickly refers to several miracles from the *De morte Hieronymi* and the *De miraculis* and relates at length one story taken from the latter source.⁹⁷ Yet since his sermons depart from scholastic analysis, they serve as “early models for a humanist or classicizing presentation of saints.”⁹⁸

The eighth sermon presents little biographical information. Towards the end, Vergerio mentions Jerome’s departure from Rome, his studies under Gregory of Nazianzus, his sojourns in the desert, where “a lion, who was by nature most fierce, obeyed his command,” and in Bethlehem.⁹⁹ After dwelling from the outset on his devotion to Jerome, Vergerio proceeds to identify the reasons for praising him. He celebrates his breadth of learning and the variety of his virtues. Jerome deserves to be known for “his expertise in letters, his fluency in diverse languages, his eloquence in speech, his interpretation of poetry’s hidden meanings, his vast recall of history, his knowledge of natural phenomena and of moral principles, combined with his understanding of Holy Scripture and authentic theology.” The virtues that distinguish Jerome are “temperance, courage, prudence, loyalty, kindness, patience, and affability.”¹⁰⁰ Given his extraordinary qualities, Vergerio exclaims:

How then must we appraise Jerome, who amassed within himself all the virtues and mastered all the liberal arts and did so not in some superficial manner but to the maximum degree? His life has been an example of all holiness, his eloquence a cause of amazement, his learning a veritable miracle!¹⁰¹

Indeed, the only miracle ascribed to Jerome in the eighth sermon is his learning.

Erasmus concluded the second section of the volume of *spuria* with Vergerio’s panegyric, which he entitled in the edition’s tables of con-

⁹⁶ Ibid., 125, 130.

⁹⁷ John M. McManamon, ed. and trans., *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder and Saint Jerome: An Edition and Translation of Sermones pro Sancto Hieronymo* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999), 215-19.

⁹⁸ Frazier, *Possible Lives*, 285.

⁹⁹ McManamon, *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder and Saint Jerome*, 233.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 227.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 229.

tents as *Laudatio Hieronymi*.¹⁰² The third and final part of the volume ended with the three forgeries and the *Plerosque nimirum*. He did not include, as Rice mistakenly stated, the biography of Maniacoria.¹⁰³ Vergerio's oration went without comment, but Erasmus openly disdained the other texts.

In his *censurae*, he ridiculed the three letters for having the same style, although they were supposed to be the work of three different authors. The forger could not even in the slightest way vary a figure of speech, Erasmus writes in his critique of the *De morte Hieronymi*. He put the same shoe on every foot, a proverb, as Erasmus explains in the *Adages* (IV.iv.56), said of inexperienced physicians who, without considering the cause of illnesses, apply the same remedies to each one, even though different illnesses require different cures.¹⁰⁴ According to the forger, everyone—Jerome, Augustine, Cyril, Eusebius, Ambrose—wrote with the same style. He probably thought that Cicero stammers too. Erasmus warns the pious reader that the letter is not worth reading and complains: “St. Jerome does not require false embellishments of this sort; nor is he worthy to be painted by such a bungling artist.”¹⁰⁵ Of the *De magnificentiis* Erasmus asks: “Immortal God, could Augustine talk such nonsense?” The impostor wrote the *vita* extremely foolishly and without the least bit of learning. “Our actor,” concludes Erasmus, “has changed character here, but he was not able to change his voice or gesture.”¹⁰⁶ In Pseudo-Cyril's *De miraculis*, one also finds “the same style, the same mind, the same madness.” Whomever he impersonates, the “actor of this play” always resembled himself. What if “this hack” (*hic rabula*) had had a talent for writing or speaking? With what sport he would have filled the whole world! Yet owing to the amazingly poor quality of the writing, the letter cannot be attributed to anyone unless we say that the author was more foolish than Morychus—a proverb from Sicily (*Adages* II.ix.1), where Morychus was another name for Bacchus, that applied to anyone who has done something ridiculous or

¹⁰² *Opera* (1516), 1: γ5v, δ2r, δ7v. The title that announces the text in the volume of *spuria* reads *Petri Pauli Vergerii Iustinopolitani de Divo Hieronymo sermo*. See *Opera* (1516), 2: 187r.

¹⁰³ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 121.

¹⁰⁴ ASD II-7: 213.

¹⁰⁵ *Opera* (1516), 2: 209r.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 2: 221v.

stupid¹⁰⁷—or unless anyone willingly wants to be deceived. Christians, Erasmus insists, should reject these legends (*fabulamenta*). If he were to tolerate any fiction for an example of piety, he would want a skilled person (*artifex*), not some hack born only to waste paper.¹⁰⁸ Introducing the *Plerosque nimirum*, Erasmus observes: “That this history scarcely corresponds to the merits of so great a man others have also pointed out before us.” He must have been thinking of Bussi, who, in the 1470 edition of Jerome’s letters—an edition that Erasmus consulted—noted in the title to this *vita* that its author was unknown and that it did not do justice to the merits of so great a doctor. Erasmus would not have published such trifles were it not for the editorial decision to leave out nothing that either the scholarly or unrefined reader would desire.¹⁰⁹

Erasmus’ *vita* does not openly single out the *Plerosque nimirum* for criticism, but its attack on the three letters is consistent with the *censurae*, if not harsher. The forger was completely devoid of eloquence and knowledge of literature. He was a shameless liar, worthy of being stoned to death, a stoning in which, were he still alive, every mortal ought to participate. The actor played the part of Eusebius of Cremona, Cyril, Augustine, Ambrose, Damasus, even Jerome, but his style never changed. So stupid was he that he was actually incapable of declaring the most certain facts. Of Jerome he told ridiculous tall tales of miracles and the most shamefully inane stories. These were not the product of his imagination but ridiculously and wantonly wrenched from the most widely circulating histories. “How lucky Jerome is,” Erasmus quips sarcastically, “to have such an extraordinary herald!”¹¹⁰

Hieronimus ex Hieronymo, Hieronymus ex Erasmo

The front matter in Erasmus’ first edition of Jerome approximates that of Bussi. The Italian editor opens the first volume with a dedicatory letter to Paul II and proceeds to the table of contents and then to the *Plerosque nimirum*. After the title page with the *privilegia* on the

¹⁰⁷ ASD II-4: 215-16.

¹⁰⁸ *Opera* (1516), 2: 224r.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 2: 235r.

¹¹⁰ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 137.

obverse, the first volume of Erasmus' 1516 edition begins with the dedicatory letter to Archbishop William Warham, followed by the life of Jerome, and the tables of contents.¹¹¹ Whether or not Erasmus intended it, from a comparative typographical and taxonomical perspective his *Vita Hieronymi* responds to and replaces the *Plerosque nimirum*. The *Vita* functions not only as a preface but also as a corrective and novelty in the tradition of printing Jerome's letters. For the first time, an editor supplied his own fresh account of Jerome's life instead of inserting an older text of an anonymous other, a text that, in the estimation of Bussi and Erasmus, was inadequate.

Since Erasmus composed both the dedication and the *Vita*, they sit well next to each other. Benedetto Clausi has claimed that many formal and substantive "points of contact" exist between the two texts. What the dedication says in the language of cultural history, the *Vita* translates into a narrative and biographical form. Both texts witness to the dialectic between past and present that resonates profoundly in the shared "polemic" on the cult of the saints.¹¹² In the dedicatory letter, Erasmus does not want to despise "the simple piety of the common folk," yet he is amazed by their "absurd judgment," which places greater value on mundane relics—slippers, "drivel-stained napkins," tunics, or shirts—than the writings of the saints, their "most sacred and most powerful relics."¹¹³ He might have been surprised to read an account by Tobia del Borgo written for his old teacher Guarino Guarini of an event that took place in Milan in 1438: a riotous crowd, galvanized by a priest, demanded the return of an ancient manuscript, supposedly the work of St. Ambrose, borrowed by Cardinal Branda da Castiglione, who, it was feared, might spirit it away.¹¹⁴ In the *Vita*, Erasmus does not mention relics, but he refuses to discuss miracles attributed to Jerome, and, in another place, he disdains the seemingly pious but nonetheless silly enthusiasm for praising the saints to excess. Those thus inspired would, if they could, make Christ greater than he is. Mary is practically his equal. Everyone promotes his favourite saint in a partisan spirit. For the Franciscans St. Francis is not praised enough; others feel the

¹¹¹ In subsequent editions, the front matter began with the tables of contents.

¹¹² Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre*, 63.

¹¹³ CWE 3: 257, ep. 396.

¹¹⁴ Frazier, *Possible Lives*, 1-3.

same way about St. Benedict or St. Augustine.¹¹⁵ Erasmus' comments about the cult of the saints are few and scattered. We can call them outbursts, but we would exaggerate to view them as a polemic.

Clausi is correct in seeing a dialectic between the past and present in the letter and the *Vita*. To Warham Erasmus contrasts the ancient pagan practice of venerating the writings of great authors with the more recent Christian neglect of eminent Christian writers with disastrous consequences: "...how few of them survive, preserved more by accident than by any help from us! And those survivors, how foully mutilated, how badly adulterated, how full throughout of monstrous errors, so that to survive in that condition was no great privilege!"¹¹⁶ Erasmus insists in the *Vita* that monasticism in Jerome's day was "far different" from the institution that "today we see fettered by ceremonies." The life of women who, like Jerome's sister, vowed themselves to virginity varied greatly from those who "today are imprisoned, like wild beasts, behind an iron grate."¹¹⁷ Yet Erasmus implies at least one continuity in the life of the Church. Discerning his vocation, Jerome rejected marriage and saw the life of clerics and bishops fraught with the most serious dangers on account of their honours, wealth, and worldly business. "And the life of many was a source of displeasure, since already then," Erasmus concludes, "was that ancient priestly piety degenerating into tyranny and arrogance."¹¹⁸

The distinction between past and present collapses in the letter to Warham. Erasmus writes that great authors

speak to more people and more effectively dead than alive. They converse with us, instruct us, tell us what to do and what not to do, give us advice and encouragement and consolation as loyally and as readily as anyone can. In fact, they then most truly come alive for us when they themselves have ceased to live.

A contemporary of Cicero will "know less of Cicero than they do who by constant reading of what he wrote converse with his spirit every day."¹¹⁹ That texts bring to life their authors is also true of the New Testament, and in the case of Christ, this rhetorical principle

¹¹⁵ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 171, 173-74.

¹¹⁶ CWE 3: 255-257; 257 (quotation).

¹¹⁷ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 145, 149.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 145.

¹¹⁹ CWE 3: 256, ep. 396.

applies also to the written record of a speaker, as Erasmus makes clear in the *Paraclesis*, a preface to the *Novum instrumentum*, which appeared in print only months before the edition of Jerome. Recalling Christ's promise to remain with his followers until the end of time, Erasmus believes that he fulfills this promise especially in the Scriptures,

in which even now he lives, breathes, and speaks to us more powerfully, I would almost say, than when he lived among human beings. The Jews saw and heard less than you see and hear in the Gospels, so long as you pay attention with your ears and eyes, with which he can be discerned and heard.

Erasmus returns to this theme at the very end of the *Paraclesis*. The Scriptures make Christ more present than any image. Images portray only the body, but the Scriptures "bring you the living image of his most sacred mind, Christ himself speaking, healing, dying, rising. Ultimately they make him so completely present that you would see less if you looked upon him face to face."¹²⁰ Jerome's textual immanence is not an explicit theme of the biography, but it seems implicit in the conclusion. Erasmus hopes that everyone will embrace Jerome as though reborn and urges: "Let men and women, let every age come to know him, read him, drink him in. There is no field of learning where he cannot be of assistance, no way of life that his teachings cannot mould."¹²¹

A comparison of the dedicatory letter and the *Vita* yields other parallels. In both texts, Erasmus describes Jerome the writer as a river of gold. To possess Jerome, he assures Warham, is to acquire "a river of gold, a well stocked library." Will Jerome, Erasmus asks in the biography, be considered not a theologian but a grammarian subordinate to the Scotists because he preferred divine things to human dreams and the Scriptures to Scotist thorns, because he did not mix up everything with the most trivial distinctions and preferred to flow like a river of gold carrying with him an abundance of riches?¹²² Both Erasmus and Jerome are like Hercules, furthermore. To Warham Erasmus vaunts his own Herculean labours to edit Jerome. When, as Erasmus explains in the *Vita*, Jerome in Rome

¹²⁰ *Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus: Ausgewählte Werke*, ed. Hajo Holborn and Anne-Marie Holborn (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1933), 147, 149.

¹²¹ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 190.

¹²² CWE 3: 265, ep. 396; *Erasmii Opuscula*, 179.

laboured under the ill will of his enemies, “he learned after the fashion of Hercules that a snake needs to be subdued at the very end, as Horace says (*Epistulae* 2.1.12).”¹²³ Finally, the dedicatory letter anticipates Jerome’s scholarly reputation acclaimed in the *Vita*. “Other authors,” Erasmus informs Warham, “have each a different claim upon us; Jerome alone possesses, united in one package, as the phrase goes, and to a remarkable degree, all the gifts that we admire separately in others.” When it comes to eloquence, he surpasses all other Christian writers, even Cicero himself. Greece produced no man more learned than Jerome. No one can rival his knowledge of history, geography, antiquities, sacred and secular literature, and Scripture. This celebration of Jerome’s erudition recalls Vergerio’s praises in his eighth sermon. While Erasmus emphasizes Jerome’s intellectual gifts, he remembers his spiritual qualities: “And if you contemplate his lofty character, who breathes the spirit of Christ more vividly? Who has taught him with more enthusiasm? Who ever followed him more exactly in his way of life?”¹²⁴

If we turn to the way in which Erasmus portrayed that life, we discover that he read more widely in Jerome than previous biographers. He often specifically identifies his sources by giving the *incipit* of a letter, but at times he mentions only Jerome’s correspondent. Erasmus’ *Vita* makes explicit references to the preface to Jerome’s *Commentary on Obadiah*, the *Apology against Rufinus*, and the *De viris illustribus*. When he points out that Jerome received a liberal education in Rome, he mistakenly appeals to the eleventh, not the twelfth, book of Jerome’s *Commentary on Ezekiel*.¹²⁵ Elsewhere Erasmus is much less precise. Jerome notes “somewhere” that he laboured thirty years on interpreting the Bible. Erasmus’ unmentioned source is the preface to the *Commentary on Obadiah*.¹²⁶ His references come in the form of allusions to and short or extensive quotations from Jerome’s writings usually to prove a point. The second time that he appeals to the letter to Asella (ep. 45), he, like Maniacoria, quotes from it at length yet limits himself to allow Jerome to prove that he was not despa-

¹²³ CWE 3: 263, ep. 396; *Erasmi Opuscula*, 157.

¹²⁴ CWE 3: 259, ep. 396.

¹²⁵ *Erasmi opuscula*, 141; Jerome: CCSL 75: 556.

¹²⁶ *Erasmi opuscula*, 170; Jerome: CCSL 76: 350.

rately in love with Paula and that his relationship with her was founded on piety and sacred studies, not scandalous pleasure.¹²⁷

Erasmus valued documentary evidence and realized that without it any assertions about facts were untenable. All that Jerome tells us of his father was his name, Eusebius. He does not say whether he was a commoner or an aristocrat, a poor man or a rich man, a private person or a public official. Nevertheless, some claim that his parents were high-ranking nobles in order to make him a city prefect. Erasmus obviously disagrees with the *Plerosque nimirum* which held that Jerome was “born of noble stock.”¹²⁸ The anonymous biography also claimed that Victorinus taught Jerome rhetoric and Donatus taught him grammar, as did the anonymous *Hieronymus noster* and Maniacoria.¹²⁹ Erasmus repeats the claim but casts doubt on it. He reads Jerome’s *Chronicle* as saying: “Victorinus the rhetorician and Donatus the grammarian, my teacher, are held to be illustrious in Rome.” Jerome refers only to Donatus as his teacher. He does not say “my teachers,” but that was how the *Plerosque nimirum* read the passage. Nor does he call Victorinus his teacher in the *De viris illustribus* or anywhere else.¹³⁰ J. N. D. Kelly adduced the same reasons as Erasmus. Cavallera added that Victorinus closed his school before Jerome began his studies in Rome.¹³¹

Jerome was baptized in Rome. That is what he meant when he wrote to Damasus (ep. 15), professing his desire to follow the faith of that city where “he had received the garb of Christ.” Erasmus correctly presumes that this did not refer to priestly ordination. He does not quote Jerome directly, who affirmed that in Rome “I received the garments of Christ in days gone by.”¹³² A baptized person received a white garment as a symbol of innocence, Erasmus explains. The *Plerosque nimirum* relates that Jerome, educated in Rome and “receiving the garment of Christ, was also ordained a cardinal priest

¹²⁷ *Erasmii opuscula*, 159-60.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 140; PL 22: 201.

¹²⁹ PL 22: 177, 185, 202.

¹³⁰ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 142; PL 22: 202. The modern critical edition upholds Erasmus’ reading: *Victorinus rhetor et Donatus grammaticus praeceptor meus Romae insignes habentur*. See Rudolf Helm, ed., *Die Chronik des Hieronymus/Hieronymi chronicon in Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte: Eusebius Werke*, vol. 7 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1956), 239.

¹³¹ J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975); Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 1: 9.

¹³² CSEL 54: 63.

there.”¹³³ Erasmus might say that the reference to baptism was not clearly enough distinguished from ordination.

To those who claim that Jerome was ordained a cardinal priest Erasmus replies with all due respect that “in my view this has surely been made up, since I think that not even the name of cardinal had been heard at that time.” Jerome’s era knew nothing of “the splendour and dignity of cardinals that we recognize today.” In his second edition of Jerome, Erasmus abbreviated his remarks to appear more circumspect. While some note that Jerome was ordained a cardinal priest, he was not sure if the title of cardinal existed at that time.¹³⁴

The story in which Jerome unwittingly donned a woman’s clothes does not ring true. It was not like Jerome to spare his adversaries by omitting any mention of something that was as patently scandalous as this, especially since the protection of his reputation for integrity was at stake. Quoting from the letter to Asella (ep. 45) for the first time in the *Vita*, Erasmus shows how Jerome rehearses the attacks of his enemies. He was supposedly disgraceful, dissembling, slippery—a liar who deceived like Satan. One man took him to task for the way he walked and laughed, another belittled his facial features, a third was suspicious of his simplicity.¹³⁵ Obviously, if his Roman enemies had crowed over him clad as a woman, Jerome would have mentioned it. Erasmus refers to no other legends in the *Vita*; he “silently suppressed the lion.”¹³⁶

Erasmus’ ability to correct and dismiss earlier biographies had its limits, however. He thinks Jerome was ordained in Rome after his return from Syria. Aware that some report that he was ordained at the age of twenty by Pope Liberius, he will neither uphold nor refute this claim since in his view there is no reliable information about when the ordination took place.¹³⁷ Erasmus does not entertain the idea that Pope Damasus ordained Jerome, as *Plerosque nimirum* maintained.¹³⁸ The unknown author of this text, borrowing from *Hieronymus noster*, wrote that Jerome returned to Bethlehem, “where he like a sensible animal betook himself to the crib of the Lord”—*ubi prudens*

¹³³ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 144; PL 22: 201-202.

¹³⁴ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 155.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 158; Jerome: CSEL 54: 324.

¹³⁶ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 131.

¹³⁷ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 154-55.

¹³⁸ PL 22: 204.

animal ad praesepe Domini sese contulit. The saying originated with Marcellinus Comes, who stated that Jerome arrived at Bethlehem as a young man, “where like a sensible animal he soon offered himself to the crib of the Lord, remaining for ever”—*ubi prudens animal ad praesepe domini se mox optulit permansurum*. In the *Apology against Rufinus*, Jerome writes that, after inspecting the monasteries of Nitria, “straight away I hurried to return to my Bethlehem, where I worshipped at the crib and cradle of the Saviour”—*Protinus concito gradu Bethlehem meam reuersum, ubi adoravi praesepe et incunabula Saluatoris*. Did the *Apology* along with the *Plerosque nimirum* inspire Erasmus’ comment that Jerome “chose Bethlehem, near the crib of his Lord, as the abode for approaching old age”—*Bethlehem iuxta Domini sui praesepe venturae senectuti sedem delegit?*¹³⁹

Another parallel suggests itself between the *De morte Hieronymi* and Erasmus’ *Vita*. Pseudo-Eusebius insists that there are two forms of martyrdom: “one is to perish by the swords of the impious, the other is to preserve patience in one’s mind in infirmities and adversities.” Jerome was clearly a martyr. He “on account of justice and gentleness and the healthy words of his teaching resolutely endured in this world’s sea of tears a powerful struggle with a throng of evils, knowing that wisdom is more powerful than everything.” Recalling Jerome’s conflicts with critics and heretics, Erasmus asks: “Who will seek out martyrdom in a life of this kind, for what else was it but a long-lasting and unceasing martyrdom?”¹⁴⁰

In comparison with earlier biographical accounts, by consulting Jerome’s writings Erasmus enriched the saint’s life with a more complex itinerary and a more elaborate web of personal associations. Jerome was born in Strido in 331 when Constantine was Emperor. His father was called Eusebius and his brother Paulinianus. He had a maternal aunt named Castorina. We do not know the names of his mother or sister. Jerome left Strido for Rome, where he continued his education. Pammachius, Bonosus, and Heliodorus were his fellow students. With Bonosus he journeyed throughout Gaul after their Roman education. From Trier he wrote to Florentius, telling that he had copied out Hilary of Poitiers’ long book *On Synods*. Wishing to withdraw to a place where he could more easily devote himself

¹³⁹ PL 22: 180, 206; Croke, *Chronicle of Marcellinus*, 5; Jerome: CCSL 79: 94; Erasmus: *Erasmii Opuscula*, 163.

¹⁴⁰ PL 22: 242; *Erasmii Opuscula*, 169-70.

to sacred studies and to Christ, he decided to become a monk. He brought his library with him and settled in the desert in Syria after seeing the holy places in Jerusalem. In Antioch, he witnessed the factionalism arising from three different contenders for the office of bishop. The solitude of Chalcis was too close to Arian supporters to be a place of calm. Jerome moved further away from human company and for four years communed only with Christ and his books. To learn Hebrew he hired the most learned Jews as his teachers. Eventually and reluctantly, he left Syria to return to Rome in the company of Epiphanius of Salamis and Paulinus of Antioch. These two bishops went on ecclesiastical business at the behest of the Emperor. Erasmus interprets Jerome's return as a benefit for all Christians and in accordance with divine providence. In Rome, he made his way among several female ascetics: Marcella, Sophronia, Principia, Paula, Eustochium, Melania. Pope Damasus held him especially dear. The Origenist faction in Rome made Jerome thoroughly unwelcome, and he felt compelled to leave. So he returned to Syria and settled in Bethlehem. Nearby, Paula established four monasteries, three for women and the fourth for men, where Jerome spent many years of a pleasant and holy life with pious and learned friends.¹⁴¹

Erasmus was the first to notice that Jerome journeyed to Syria twice. A long quotation from the third book of his *Apology against Rufinus* helps Erasmus prove the second trip. After setting out from Rome, he landed in Cyprus where Bishop Epiphanius welcomed him. Jerome greeted Paulinus when he arrived in Antioch. In the middle of winter, he came to Jerusalem, moved on to Egypt to visit the monasteries of Nitria, and finally returned to Bethlehem. Some might, Erasmus speculates, think that Jerome was describing his first trip, but it makes more sense to see this as a reference to the second. Locally renowned bishops would not have received him as a mere young man when he first departed for the East. Furthermore, his travels in Syria and Egypt are remarkably consistent with the travels of Paula, which he describes in her epitaph.¹⁴²

In connection with the second sojourn, Erasmus mentions several people who played a role in Jerome's life. He was not sure when

¹⁴¹ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 139, 140, 143, 144, 148, 150, 152, 154, 155-57, 163.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 161. For the passage from the *Apology*, see CCSL 79: 93-94.

Jerome studied under Gregory of Nazianzus.¹⁴³ Modern scholarship has revealed that this was at the beginning of the 380s during his first trip to the East when Gregory was Bishop of Constantinople. Stefan Rebenich cautioned:

We should not infer from Jerome's subsequent allusions to his preceptor and teacher Gregory of Nazianzus that his sojourn to Constantinople was an educational leave. In his later writings, Jerome, depicting himself as Gregory's pupil, made much of the authority of the learned and, we may add, orthodox Cappadocian Father, in the hope of reducing the critics of his scholarship and orthodoxy to silence.¹⁴⁴

Erasmus reports that in Alexandria, Didymus the Blind was his teacher; Baraninas the Jew taught him Hebrew.¹⁴⁵ In his contests with heretics, Jerome received support from Epiphanius and Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria as well as from his Roman friends Marcella, Pammachius, and Chromatius. Many came to visit Jerome in Bethlehem, including Alypius, sent by Augustine, Paulus Orosius the historian sent by the same, Sulpicius Severus, and Apodemius from Gaul.¹⁴⁶

Augustine pales in comparison with Jerome. Only by his rank as bishop was he Jerome's superior; otherwise, "in age and in all other qualities," he was inferior to him. Instead of criticizing Jerome's life and erudition, the sainted Bishop of Hippo should have esteemed and imitated these. Erasmus deleted these sentiments in the second and subsequent editions of Jerome. He retained the rest of his original comments. Augustine skirmished, as it were, with Jerome in his critique of Jerome's views on dissembling (in his exegesis of Galatians 2), in his treatise on the origin of souls, in his attack on translating (the Old Testament) directly out of Hebrew, in his regret about Jerome's feud with Rufinus. His objective was to win Jerome over to his own point of view. Jerome's replies were harsh. As soon as they got to know each other better, however, they made common cause in defending the Catholic faith against heretics. Augustine grew less pleased with himself as he became completely familiar with

¹⁴³ *Erasmi Opuscula*, 161-62.

¹⁴⁴ Rebenich, *Jerome*, 21-22.

¹⁴⁵ *Erasmi Opuscula*, 162.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 169, 171-72.

Jerome's greatness. The two managed to forge a close friendship.¹⁴⁷

Erasmus disagreed with the assertion of the Italian humanist Francesco Filelfo (1398-1481) that Augustine was the master of dialectics while Jerome excelled in eloquence. Although it was not his business to diminish the praise due to Augustine, Erasmus insisted on Jerome's superiority. Jerome was not simply more eloquent than Augustine; he surpassed him in dialectics and erudition. An expert in Greek, Jerome read all of Aristotle and other philosophers too, while Augustine read only two short treatises by Aristotle translated into Latin. Speaking candidly, Erasmus feels that Augustine's style of argumentation is all too intricate and irksome; Jerome's is much more substantial and vigorous. Filelfo was, furthermore, not an accurate judge of the lives of these two Fathers. Jerome was stricter with himself than Augustine but more lenient with others, and Jerome never demanded of his confrères what Augustine required of his clergy. To moderate his comparison, Erasmus inserted two sentences in the second edition of Jerome's works. He allows that the two Fathers were extraordinary in their own specialties: Jerome in eloquence and Augustine in dialectics. He finally breaks off "the comparison between the two leaders of the Latin Church" since "it is more appropriate to thank God for their excellent virtues than to stir up controversy among scholars."¹⁴⁸

Whereas Erasmus was able to show some respect for Augustine, he was uncompromisingly ruthless towards Rufinus.¹⁴⁹ Jerome and Rufinus, friends since their youth, first fell out over the theological value of Origen in the 390s. Rufinus never wavered in his admiration and advocacy of Origen, insisting that many of the doctrinally suspect passages in his works were interpolations added by heretics. Jerome, however, revised his early enthusiasm for Origen as Epiphanius of Salamis spearheaded an anti-Origen movement demanding that all and sundry should denounce the third-century Alexandrian theologian as a heretic. After a brief reconciliation Rufinus and Jerome relapsed into an implacable hostility. The upshot of their quarrel "was to ruin the reputation of Rufinus down through the

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 167-68.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 180-81.

¹⁴⁹ Godin, "Érasme biographe patristique," 703-706, reprehended Erasmus' treatment of Rufinus.

ages.” Erasmus’ edition of Jerome reawakened interest in the personality of Rufinus, but only to his detriment.¹⁵⁰

In the context of discussing the interest in writing pious fictions, Erasmus writes that Jerome accused Rufinus of this practice. The latter returned the favour, preferring to besmirch another with mud instead of wiping off the mud hurled at him. Despite Rufinus’ status as a “slanderer” (*calumniator*), Erasmus uses him as a source for Jerome’s life, principally his *Apology against Jerome*.¹⁵¹ As we shall see shortly, he thrice applies the verb *calumniari*—to accuse falsely or maliciously—to Rufinus in the *Vita*.

Erasmus quotes four passages from Jerome’s earliest letter to Rufinus (ep. 3). The first two praise the commitment to the ascetic life of their mutual friend, Bonosus. Although Erasmus includes the reference to Bonosus as the fellow student of Jerome and Rufinus—*ecce puer honestus saeculi nobiscum artibus institutus*—he does not identify Rufinus as one of Jerome’s companions during his education in Rome. Was this an oversight or willful neglect? According to Erasmus, a passage at the end of the letter seems to foreshadow Rufinus’ eventual abandonment of his friendship with Jerome, who implores Rufinus not to be a forgetful friend and reminds him: “A friendship that was capable of being terminated was never a true one.”¹⁵² Erasmus does not quote from the opening of the letter in which Jerome expresses his devotion to Rufinus, then residing in Egypt at Nitria. How he wished that Christ would transport him to Rufinus so that he could embrace and kiss him.¹⁵³

Erasmus does not explain the false accusations that Rufinus levelled (*calumniatus est*) against Jerome about his return to Syria. Yet

¹⁵⁰ Francis X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411): His Life and Works* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1945), 110 (quotation), x–xi. Since Cavallera, scholars have abandoned taking Jerome’s side in the dispute with Rufinus, aiming for a more balanced account. See Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 1: 193–286; Murphy, *Rufinus*, 59–110, 138–57; Kelly, *Jerome*, 195–209, 227–58; Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 121–51, 172–80; Benoît Jeanjean, *Saint Jérôme et l’hérésie* (Paris: Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, 1999), 37–42; Rebenich, *Jerome*, 43–50.

¹⁵¹ *Erasmi Opuscula*, 134, 138

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 146–48. Hilberg (CSEL 54: 15) read the reference to Bonosus as a fellow student with Jerome and Rufinus as *ecce puer honestis saeculo nobiscum artibus institutus*. Erasmus read the final sentence as *Amicitia, quae desinere potuit, nunquam vera fuit* (*Erasmi Opuscula*, 148). Hilberg (CSEL 54: 18) read *potest* for *potuit*.

¹⁵³ CSEL 54: 13.

when Rufinus accuses (*calumniatur*) Jerome of not spending more than a month with Didymus, Erasmus calls this ridiculous even though it is true. It does not matter how much time one spends with a teacher but what one gains from the association. Rufinus falsely charges (*calumniatur*) that Melania had too little in common with Jerome. Erasmus, however, replies that it is more likely that the falling out between Melania and Jerome was Rufinus' doing.¹⁵⁴ He deflects into an opportunity for praising Jerome Rufinus' objection to Jerome's having taught the sons of aristocrats poetry and rhetoric in Bethlehem. The charge did not trouble Jerome, who did not think it worthy of a rebuttal. A comparison between Jerome and St. Paul was in order: "For indeed when Paul takes pride in making himself all things to all people so that he might gain all for Christ (1 Corinthians 9: 22), why is it disgraceful if St. Jerome, desiring to benefit everyone, adapted himself to every nation, every sex, every age?" This "most holy man welcomed with Christian kindness" the multitude that streamed towards him from all parts of the world. He sent no one away except for those publicly denounced as heretics.¹⁵⁵

Rufinus, according to Erasmus, belonged to the Origenist faction at Rome that despised Jerome. He was never a genuine friend to Jerome but a "most pestilential plotter" (*insidiator pestilentissimus*).¹⁵⁶ The "general and standard-bearer" of the Origenists, when he was young, had the closest of relationships with Jerome, founded on a "wonderful love." Yet, according to Aristotle, the most intense love can result in the fiercest of hatreds. An initial disagreement led to a restoration of their friendship. Jerome made every effort to avoid even the hint of ill will and pretended not to notice Rufinus' "secretive subterfuges and poisonous smears." The only conclusion one can draw from Erasmus' presentation of their relationship is that Rufinus was responsible for the renewed hostilities. He accused Jerome of heresy. Jerome answered the charge. A badly mended relationship fell apart and "a feigned friendship broke out into an open feud." Once the "bonds of decency and modesty" had been undone, each man raged against the other.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ *Erasmi Opuscula*, 160, 162, 163.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 164.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 158.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 164-65.

Erasmus exonerates Jerome. His writings betray “a tempestuous and fiery personality, most humane, to be sure, yet unrestrained.” Jerome did not suffer insults, but he never undertook to hurt anyone. Furthermore, it was a sign of impiety, not virtue, to tolerate an accusation of heresy. We should also take into account the many irritations that could unsettle even the gentlest of spirits. Erasmus is not impressed by Rufinus’ learning; he imagines him to have had a poisonous and deceitful character. When Jerome portrays him as incapable of eloquence and ignorant, constantly mocking his obtuseness, we either agree with this representation of Rufinus or we turn Jerome into liar. Obviously, the second option is impossible.¹⁵⁸

That Gennadius thought highly of Rufinus amazes Erasmus. Not only did he shower him with excessive praise and count him among the “leading doctors of the Church,” but he surely had Jerome in mind when in the entry for Rufinus in his *De viris illustribus* he adds that Rufinus responded with two books to an unidentified detractor of his writings, “arguing and proving that he had with the Lord’s help stirred up his talent in the sight of God and for the benefit of the Church.” But his opponent, “impelled by the spur of envy, applied his pen to abuse.” Erasmus suspects that Gennadius, a man from Gaul, took offence that Jerome treated Vigilantius (another Gaul) with insufficient kindness and attacked Palladius; for that reason Gennadius wanted to avenge them.¹⁵⁹

Rufinus took every opportunity to scheme against Jerome. At his instigation, Erasmus claims, Vigilantius, Palladius the Galatian, Magnus the Roman orator, and Jerome’s friends Domnio and Pam-machius embroiled Jerome in controversy. The last two prevented the circulation of the books in which Jerome seemed to praise virginity too generously and consequently to treat marriage unfairly. The reference is to the *Adversus Jovinianum*; curiously, Erasmus neglects to name Jovinian as Jerome’s main target in the dispute over the relative merits of virginity and marriage. Rufinus’ disciples forged a letter in which they had Jerome deplore his errors and repudiate his work to translate the Scriptures out of Hebrew. Anyone who reads Rufi-

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 165.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 165-66; Richardson, *Hieronymus: Liber de viris inlustribus*; Gennadius: *Liber de viris inlustribus*, 68.

nus' books can easily perceive how much poison against Jerome, the "most holy man," they contained.¹⁶⁰

Erasmus' treatment of Rufinus is symptomatic of the prevailing effort in the *Vita* to come to Jerome's defence whenever possible. This extends to Jerome's faults. The loss of his virginity, Erasmus believes, took place when he was young and before he was baptized. This sort of vice is common among youths, who commit it before they know it is a vice. Jerome, moreover, punished himself for many years in penance for the sin of his youth. Erasmus directs attention away from Jerome the sinner to Jerome the exemplar:

Those who value virginity should embrace Jerome's commendation of it. Those who wish with the alkali of penance to make white a somewhat stained baptismal gown should follow Jerome's example, especially those who have devoted most of their lives to foul pleasures.¹⁶¹

Some, like Augustine and Filelfo, object to the harsh language sometimes evident in Jerome's writings when he seems to give fiercer vent to his passions than Christian gentleness would allow. Erasmus disqualifies their objection, however. They do not sufficiently take into account the circumstances of Jerome's writings, including the depravity of his opponents and the sort of abuse that defies tolerance. Yes, Jerome attacked Rufinus fiercely, "but he deserved fiercer attacks." Jerome "boldly repels the accusation of heresy," while Rufinus "threatens destruction and attacked his good name with false charges of disgraceful deeds." A close inspection of Jerome's controversial works will reveal "wonderful traces of a most human and most gentle disposition." He often jokes and resorts to wit more than venom. Sometimes he yields to the times and the feelings of friends, and, if possible, he seeks to spare an enemy when parrying accusations. He overlooks many things, "preferring to submit to Christian modesty than to hurt feelings." In his letter against Bishop John of Jerusalem, how much of his restraint is a result of his modesty and how much of respect for John's rank as bishop? If anything comes up that gives offence, he often suppresses names, or sometimes he invents them.¹⁶² Experts on Jerome would wince at Erasmus' assessment of the *Apology*

¹⁶⁰ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 166-68.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 174.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 175.

against *John of Jerusalem*, now commonly considered a “ferocious philippic,” a “violent indictment,” or Jerome’s “most aggressive pamphlet.”¹⁶³

Who Jerome was and what he represented for humanism merge in Erasmus’ treatment of Jerome’s well-known dream. A univocal interpretation of the dream that concluded that Christians were not to read pagan literature would have rendered impossible not only Renaissance humanism but also medieval scholasticism, grounded as it was on Aristotle, and the development of Christianity as we know it. Humanists were keen to thwart such an interpretation. Petrarch and others drew attention to Jerome’s uninterrupted practice of quoting from pagan classics. That must have meant he approved of them despite the dream. Vergerio noted that the dream did not justify a blanket condemnation of eloquence. Similarly, Lorenzo Valla insisted that what was off limits for Christians was Ciceronian philosophy, not Ciceronian eloquence. Thomas Murner held that Jerome was not punished for reading pagan poets *tout court* but for reading them with too much curiosity.¹⁶⁴

In ep. 22, written in 374, Jerome relates the “story of my unhappiness” in connection with his advice to Eustochium not to wish to seem very eloquent or to amuse herself with lyric poems. Elaborating on Paul’s question about what Christ had in common with Belial (2 Corinthians 6: 15), Jerome asked: “What does Horace have to do with the Psalter, Virgil with the Gospels, Cicero with the Apostle? Would not a brother be scandalized if he saw you reclining in the presence of an idol?” Although, as Paul says, all things are clean to those who are clean and nothing should be cast away that is taken with thanks (Titus 1: 15), “nevertheless, at the same time we should not drink the cup of Christ and the cup of demons.”¹⁶⁵ This last comment ratifies the view that Jerome did not confine his warning

¹⁶³ Kelly, *Jerome*, 207; Benoît Jeanjean, *Saint Jérôme et l’hérésie*, 39; Rebenich, *Jerome*, 45.

¹⁶⁴ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 85-86; Irena Backus, “Augustine and Jerome in Thomas Murner’s *De Augustiniana Hieronymianaque reformatione poetarum* (Strasbourg, 1509),” in *Auctoritas Patrum II: Neue Beiträge zur Rezeption der Kirchenväter im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Leif Grane, Alfred Schindler, and Markus Wriedt (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1998), 21.

¹⁶⁵ CSEL 54: 188-89.

to Eustochium and Christian virgins. Jerome's words "aim at all Christians, including himself."¹⁶⁶

Many years after he left behind his family, having made himself a eunuch for the kingdom of heaven, Jerome made his way from Rome to Jerusalem, taking his library with him. Wretched man that he was, he fasted in anticipation of reading Cicero. After lamenting his sins, he took up Plautus. Reading the prophets filled him with revulsion for their "uncouth speech." Sometime around the middle of Lent, he became deathly ill with a fever. As funeral preparations were underway for a man whose only sign of life in his frigid body was the beating of his heart, he was suddenly carried off in the spirit and dragged before the seat of a judge. As Neil Adkin rightly reminded us, Jerome never expressly identified the judge. Dazzled by the brightness of the place and of those present, he fell to the ground and did not dare to look up. Asked to state his identity (*condicio*), he replied that he was a Christian. The judge said: "You lie. You are a Ciceronian, not a Christian. Where your treasure is, there also is your heart (Matthew 6: 21)." He gave orders for Jerome to be beaten. In the midst of the flogging, he cried out: "Have mercy on me, Lord, have mercy on me." On their knees before the judge, those in the court begged him to take pity on Jerome's youth and give him an opportunity for doing penance for his error. He could demand punishment if ever Jerome read "books of pagan literature." In his circumstances, Jerome would have promised even more. Invoking the name of the judge as his witness, he solemnly swore: "Lord, if ever I possess secular books, if I ever I read them, I have denied you." Dismissed after making his oath, Jerome returned to earth. He opened his eyes. They were so drenched with tears that they would have believed the unbelievable because of the pain. Jerome asserts:

In truth, this was no deep sleep or idle dreams, by which we are often deceived. I call to witness the judgment seat before which I fell; I call to witness the judgment that I feared—may I never experience such interrogation again!—that my shoulder-blades were black and blue, that I felt the blows once I woke up (*post somnum*), and that from then

¹⁶⁶ Harald Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study on the Apologists and other Christian Writers* (Göteborg, 1958), 319.

on I read the books of God with much more zeal than I had previously read the books of mortals.¹⁶⁷

Jerome generated centuries of controversy with the story and subsequent related comments. In the preface to the third book of his *Commentary on Galatians* from the late 380s, he assured Paula and Eustochium that for more than fifteen years Cicero, Virgil, or any other pagan author had never found their way into his hands. If by chance anything of pagan literature had crept into his writings, this was the result of what he remembered “through the haze, as it were, of an ancient dream.”¹⁶⁸ In 401, Rufinus published his *Apology against Jerome*, in which he recalls the oath that Jerome swore before the judge, whom Rufinus identifies as Jesus Christ. Every page of Jerome’s writings proclaims him to be a Ciceronian, however. He constantly invokes Cicero, Horace, and Virgil, and he scatters references in his works to Chrysippus, Aristides, Empedocles, and the names of other Greek authors to appear learned to his readers.¹⁶⁹ Thus, Rufinus accused Jerome of violating his oath. Invoking the authority of the prophets in the first book of his *Apology against Rufinus*, Jerome replied that one should not put any faith in dreams. If Rufinus demands that he keep a vow made in a dream, he will demand even more by asking whether Rufinus has observed everything he has promised in baptism. In Book 3 of the *Apology*, Jerome wonders why Rufinus would require something of someone asleep that he would never demand of a person who was awake. “I am guilty of a great crime,” continues Jerome, “if I told girls and virgins of Christ that secular books should not be read and if I, warned in dreams, had promised not to read them.”¹⁷⁰ In other words, Jerome did not or no longer feel bound by the vow. His letter to Magnus the orator (ep. 70), written in 397, complicated his place within the tension between Christianity and pagan culture even more. It serves as an apology not only for the recourse to “secular literature” in his writings but also for the compatibility of Scripture with this literature

¹⁶⁷ Jerome: CSEL 54: 189-91; Neil Adkin, “Some Notes on the Dream of Saint Jerome,” *Philologus* 128 (1984): 123.

¹⁶⁸ CCSL 77A: 157-158.

¹⁶⁹ CCSL 20: 88.

¹⁷⁰ CCSL 79: 31, 102.

and for the appropriation of philosophy and other pagan erudition by Christian writers.¹⁷¹

Scholars have debated various aspects of the story of the dream. Was it fact or was it fiction, a trope inspired by similar accounts of dreams, or a sick man's nightmarish delirium cut off from objective reality? Does it matter whether Jerome had the dream or not?¹⁷² When and where—in Antioch or in the Syrian desert—did Jerome have the dream?¹⁷³ Are the many classical quotations in Jerome's writings the product of a consultation of the works of pagan authors after the dream or of "a magpie mind and a vast memory"?¹⁷⁴ In simpler terms, did Jerome break his vow or not? Finally, what sort of Jerome emerges from the story of the dream? Was this the proponent of the division between secular and sacred literature who almost died "a pagan martyr for refusing to give up the books of his youth," or "the protomartyr of Latin literature," punished for his love of the pagan classics?¹⁷⁵ Or was Jerome a self-styled Christian martyr, a divinely appointed exemplar, who underwent a didactic torture (*Erziehungsfolter*) and sacrificed his predilection for the classics to save his earthly life and to be worthy of eternal life?¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ CSEL 54: 700-708.

¹⁷² Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, 318-28, believes that Jerome did have the dream. Pierre de Labriolle, "Le songe de St Jérôme," in *Miscellanea Geronimiana*, 227-35, viewed the dream as a literary fiction, however. Paul Antin, "Autour du songe de S. Jérôme," in Antin, *Recueil sur saint Jérôme* (Brussels: Latomus, 1968), 86, referred to the dream as a nightmare and asserts: "Ce fut un délire de malade, ses visions n'ont pas eu d'objectivité réelle." Barbara Feichtinger, "Der Traum des Hieronymus—ein Psychogramm," *Vigiliae Christianae* 45 (1991): 55, believed that the veracity of the dream was irrelevant but eventually characterized it as a "fiktionale Erlebnisschilderung" (62). Most recently, Megan Hale Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 26-27, gives credence to the fictional nature of the dream.

¹⁷³ Neil Adkin, "The Date of the Dream of Saint Jerome," *Studi classici e orientali* 43 (1993): 263-73.

¹⁷⁴ Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, 320-26, argued that Jerome consulted the classics during the period 386-393. Neil Adkin, "Jerome's Vow 'Never to Reread the Classics,'" *Revue des études anciennes* 101 (1999): 161-67 (quotation: 164), argues against Hagendahl's position.

¹⁷⁵ Mark Vessey, "From *Cursus* to *Ductus*: Figures of Writing in Western Late Antiquity (Augustine, Jerome, Cassiodorus, Bede)," in *European Literary Careers: The Author from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Frederick A. de Armas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 53; Vessey, "Jerome and Rufinus," 320.

¹⁷⁶ Feichtinger, "Der Traum des Hieronymus," 55, 57-58, 61, 71.

Erasmus' account of Jerome's life makes the dream seem like an incongruous event. Before he first mentions the dream, his Jerome demonstrates impeccable Christian credentials. At home in Strido he learned the "rudiments of Christian piety" along with *bonae litterae*. While describing his education in Rome, Erasmus writes that Jerome directed his attention to Porphyry's *Isagoge*, the philosophy of Aristotle, of Plato, of the Stoics, "and of all the others." He sampled them, but he did not devote himself to them. Two reasons explain why he applied himself more energetically to rhetoric and also studied disciplines relevant to rhetoric, namely history, geography, and antiquities. First, he was aware that in the Latin world theology was almost devoid of eloquence. Consequently, many were averse to reading the Scriptures. Jerome hoped that many would enjoy the Scriptures if one could combine the majesty of theology with dignified speech. Second, he wished that some day the pagans who looked down upon Christians as incapable of eloquence would be refuted. Jerome contemplated withdrawing from Roman society "so that he might dedicate himself completely to sacred studies and to Christ." In his desert retreat, he reread his entire library. He learned the Scriptures "word for word." He meditated on the prophets, taking the greatest care to draw out the mysteries of their oracles. "From the Gospels," Erasmus points out, "and from the apostolic letters, as if from the purest sources, he imbibed the philosophy of Christ. For the first step towards piety is to know the teachings of your founder." Jerome read other expositors with delight and judiciously, overlooking no writer, not even a pagan or a heretic, from whom he could derive some profit. This "most prudent man" knew how to pick gold from a dung-pit. Already then, at the time of his formation as a theologian, "he packed up what he could from the Egyptians to enrich the Lord's temple with the wealth of the enemy."¹⁷⁷

Erasmus' Jerome represents the humanist enterprise that impelled Erasmus. He combines piety and learning; he presses pagan erudition, judiciously appropriated, into the service of a rhetorically refined theology; his intellectual and spiritual foundation is the Bible. Could this be the same Jerome who was addicted to Cicero and Plautus, who was put off by the style of the prophets, and who was consequently condemned as a Ciceronian?

¹⁷⁷ *Erasmi Opuscula*, 140, 143, 145, 151.

After emphasizing Jerome's efforts to learn Hebrew and Chaldean, whose chief value lay in the study of Scripture, Erasmus moves on to a brief reference to the dream. Owing to an immoderate and youthful passion and to a love of his boyhood studies, Jerome, more than was necessary, gave himself up to emulating the dialogues of Cicero and Plato. He strove to imitate them more than the apostolic style, and "in a dream sent from heaven, he was taken off to the judgment seat of God, charged with being a Ciceronian, not a Christian, and finally, corrected by blows, he returned to himself."¹⁷⁸ This skeletal summary omits a vital ingredient: Jerome's oath.

Much later in the *Vita* Erasmus returns to the dream after defending Jerome from the accusation of having employed irascible language against his opponents. He regrets remembering that daily he hears the sort of religious and learned people who lack any piety or knowledge snarl into his ears their disparagement of what is most beautiful in Jerome: his supposedly excessive learning and an eloquence that goes beyond what is proper for theologians. All they know about Jerome is that he was flogged for being called a Ciceronian.¹⁷⁹ Erasmus responds by setting Jerome against Jerome, contrasting the younger correspondent of Eustochium with the older opponent of Rufinus. Erasmus does not add Jerome the author of the *Commentary on Galatians*, although he knew the work well, having referred to it often in his notes on the Pauline epistle in the *Novum instrumentum*.¹⁸⁰ The younger man insisted that his experience was not a dream; the older man said it was. Whom should we believe? Not surprisingly, Erasmus sides with the latter and challenges Jerome's critics:

If it were an authentic dream, that is, a vision, not a frivolous dream, why did he compare it with the silliness of common dreams? Why did he mock his opponent?¹⁸¹ Or let them unravel this knot. He said before the judgement seat: "If ever I should possess secular books, I have denied you." Why did he not disprove Rufinus' charge that he arranged at considerable cost to have the dialogues of Cicero written out for his confrères and that he lectured on poets to boys? ... Where, then, does Jerome deny or conceal that he had secular books? Or if he had denied

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 153-54.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 177-78.

¹⁸⁰ *Novum instrumentum omne* (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516), 2: 509-22.

¹⁸¹ Erasmus inserted these two questions in the edition printed by Claude Chevallon in Paris (1533-1534).

it, which rational person would have believed him?—unless perhaps we rather consider it plausible that, when he reproduces word for word several lines from Cicero in the book on the best way to translate (ep. 57), he wrote these all down based on what he remembered from his youth, not from a book. Finally, if it is a crime to possess secular books, and if anyone who reads them has denied Christ, why did only Jerome receive a flogging? Why is Aristotle more famous in the theological schools of today than Paul or Peter?

Erasmus would prefer to be flogged with Jerome than to associate with those who are so frightened by Jerome's dream that they keep a godly distance from *bonae litterae* and yet do not abstain "from the vices of those very books that for the sake of religion they dare not touch."¹⁸²

Erasmus moves on to mount a two-pronged offensive: against the scholastics who refuse to think of Jerome as a theologian and against humanist critics who maintain that Jerome was not sufficiently Ciceronian, that is, eloquent. The scholastics should not confuse theology with the intricacies of the scholastic method. Humanists should not limit eloquence to Cicero and his recent imitators; nor should they regard eloquence and Christianity as irreconcilable and embrace the former at the cost of the latter.¹⁸³ Erasmus' strategy is to vanquish the two parties with a concatenation of rhetorical questions. Against the scholastics these insist on Jerome's unrivalled expertise in the Scriptures. Among the many questions, Erasmus asks:

Who expounded [the Scriptures] with greater learning? Who treated them with greater holiness and profit? Who read the most learned interpreters more carefully? Who refuted the teachings of the heretics more effectively? Who possessed a more thorough knowledge of the philosophy of Christ? Who expressed it more vividly either in his writings or in his life?¹⁸⁴

Turning to the partisans of eloquence, Erasmus acknowledges that "our age has seen excellent men," celebrated for their eloquence: Lorenzo Valla, Ermolao Barbaro, Angelo Poliziano, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Rudolf Agricola. But their eloquence, preoccupied with style, was no match for that of Jerome, grounded in substance—a

¹⁸² *Erasmii Opuscula*, 177-78.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 178, 183-84.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 179.

thorough knowledge of what is expressed in words. Erasmus ends the interrogation of his humanist colleagues:

Who teaches more clearly? Who delights with greater refinement? Who moves more effectively? Who praises more sincerely? Who persuades with greater dignity? Who urges more ardently? Who recounts a story more sublimely? Who instructs with greater holiness? Who converses more humanely with his friends?

A true Ciceronian speaks as well as possible even if his words are not Cicero's. In Jerome all the gifts of eloquence come together so that in him can be found what Cicero lacks.¹⁸⁵ Jerome is obviously more eloquent, more Ciceronian, than Cicero himself.

Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi* functions as an *Apologia pro Hieronymo*. But we should not be too quick to interpret it simply as an *Apologia pro vita sua*. Clausi persuasively warns against insisting too much on the identification of Erasmus with the exemplary status of Jerome in the *Vita* or on the notion of Jerome as "a figure of Erasmus, the intellectual, the scholar, the philologist, the man of culture engaged in the work of self-promotion." On the one hand, Jerome remains a saint whose existence is "unrepeatable and exclusive;" on the other, he serves as a model for all those who manage to appropriate him through his writings. "Jerome," Clausi contends, "belongs and will always belong to all."¹⁸⁶

That Jerome is the *doctor universalis*, not only Erasmus' hero and the *doctor studiorum humanitatis*, is a theme that pervades the *Vita*. Erasmus dismisses the efforts of the humanist historian and archeologist Flavio Biondo (1392-1463) and of others to identify Strido with Sdrigna in Italian Istria. Their objective, completely unworthy of Christians, was undoubtedly to claim Jerome for Italy. Yet anyone who reads his books with the greatest of care and produces an accurate account of his life, even if he were born beyond Britain, has a right to claim Jerome for himself. Sounding more like a hagiographer than a biographer, Erasmus indulges his imagination when he writes that Jerome's parents took care to have him educated for the public good, and not according to their private likes, when they realized that he was born for the entire world. Since we know nothing from Jerome of his parents' ambitions for his education, we can rightly

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 185-87.

¹⁸⁶ Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre*, 123, 125.

accuse Erasmus of transgressing his professed methodological norms. When he spent four years communing only with Christ and his books during his first Syrian sojourn, Jerome pursued his goal “in order to perfect for us that distinguished pattern of Christian piety.” Jerome did not want to be an expert in piety and theology for his own sake. Thus he expected to take a long time to learn what he would teach. In the peroration of the *Vita*, Erasmus wants to reverse the neglect and misunderstanding of Jerome. As *bonae litterae* experience a revival throughout Christendom, “let us all with common studies embrace Jerome, as if reborn.” Dalmatia, Pannonia, Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Greece, Egypt, Syria, the Arabs, Saracens, and Jews—all should venerate and cultivate that “eminent luminary of the world.”¹⁸⁷

Vita Hieronymi Falso ab Erasmo Relata?

Erasmus concluded his *Vita* with this sentence: “Let only the heretics loathe and hate Jerome; he always considered them alone his fiercest enemies.”¹⁸⁸ Cavallera thought this was a surprising ending, but not Godin, who believed the comment was “completely consistent with Erasmus’ general plan” and constituted “the final and resounding testimony of a highly committed biographer, where the glorious past of a saint and his undisputed reputation as a doctor of the faith are frequently made to serve the most personal conflicts in the present.”¹⁸⁹ Jerome’s orthodoxy could cloak Erasmus’ work as an editor and as an exegete. Yet not only is his closing sentence consistent with earlier remarks about Jerome’s resistance to heretics, it also coheres with the portrait of a resolutely orthodox Jerome transmitted by previous biographers and hagiographers. We have already seen in Chapter 1 how early sixteenth-century anthologists, specifically Johannes Rhagius Aesticampianus and Heinrich Stackmann, represented Jerome as an opponent of heretics.

Peter Canisius, the most bibliographically successful anthologist of Jerome, esteemed the Church Father as the “hammer of heretics,” but his very Erasmian portrait of Jerome in the preface to his anthol-

¹⁸⁷ *Erasmi Opuscula*, 139, 141, 151, 161, 190.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 190.

¹⁸⁹ Calvalleria, *Saint Jérôme*, 2: 146; Godin, “Érasme biographe patristique,” 706.

ogy lacks a strident protestation of his orthodoxy. To be sure, the Jesuit accords Jerome the “highest authority.” He deserves “praise and respect in God’s Church;” Canisius calls him a “most holy doctor” and “this brightest light of the Church.” But it is not his “Catholic erudition,” but his moral rigour—the disciplining of the flesh and feelings with vigils, spells of sleeping on the ground, prayers, and tears—that separates him from “us” who dispute about faith without works of faith to our credit, who hold that we should be justified and saved by virtue of our faith in the grace of Christ. Here Canisius of course associates himself rhetorically with a caricatured Protestantism. Only the *Adversus Vigilantium*, added at the end of the anthology, strengthens “the people on our side” (*nostri homines*), as Canisius reverts rhetorically and theologically back to Catholicism, “in sound and Catholic teaching.” Otherwise, Canisius, like Erasmus, celebrates in Jerome the unparalleled combination of learning, eloquence, studies sacred and profane, and expertise in languages and the liberal arts. In him we clearly see pious learning and a learned piety. Even learned and eloquent Greece, usually contemptuous of Latin writers, read Jerome’s commentaries and had them translated into her own language. In many respects inferior to Jerome, Augustine is Canisius’ principal witness for Jerome’s proficiency in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew and his familiarity with all, or almost all, of previous Christian scholarship.¹⁹⁰

A panegyric on Jerome, declaimed by Matthaeus Galenus at the University of Dillingen on the saint’s feast day in 1559 and printed three years later in the first edition of Canisius’ anthology, presents Jerome’s orthodox credentials with greater determination. Galenus, a professor at Dillingen, believed that “the most precise and most sagacious transmission of the orthodox religion” was the most important part of a Christian education. Not surprisingly, therefore, he claims that Jerome’s father wanted to send his son for his education to no other place than to Rome, to the Apostolic See and the mother of the Catholic Church. “Our hero” went to Rome for the sake of a sound faith and an education in the liberal arts. To perfect his theological training Jerome studied philosophy, especially Aristotle, and Hebrew. In the context of a theological education, Galenus contrasts the “new definition and opinion” with the “Hieronymian

¹⁹⁰ PCE 3: 274-79.

and Catholic truth,” an oblique reference to the opposition between innovating Protestantism in the realm of mere opinion and Catholic certainty, to which Galenus has assimilated Jerome. After St. Paul he can think of no other saint who exhibited more “zeal for the Catholic religion.” Whenever Jerome, “the most holy Father,” perceived a heretic somewhere baring his head, he immediately felt compelled and inspired to confront the heretic and to tear him to pieces and dismember him as Elijah did to the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18: 40) and Samson did to the young lion (Judges 14: 6). The panegyric ends with a prayer to the patron saint of Dillingen, Jerome, “the light of the holy Church Triumphant,” asking him to see Mother Rome troubled by the spread of heresy and come to her help.¹⁹¹

In his biography, which appeared in his edition of Jerome’s letters and then in the subsequent *opera omnia* editions, Mariano Vittori portrayed Jerome as the champion and heroic defender of the Church.¹⁹² Unlike Erasmus, Vittori did not outline a methodology probably because this was not necessary. Erasmus had set the standard of writing Jerome’s life based on his writings, and Vittori more than complied. The printed references in the margins to Jerome’s letters and other works make Vittori’s adherence to the principle *Hieronymus ex Hieronymo* typographically unmistakable. His method was more exact and painstaking than that of Erasmus. Vittori regularly identified his sources, and he must have enjoyed quoting from several sources to prove the same point.

If his failure to acknowledge his debt to Erasmus for his methodology can be interpreted as a polemical omission,¹⁹³ then his title is explicitly polemical: *Vita Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, falso antea ab Erasmo relata, nunc per Marianum Victorium Reatinum ex eius scriptis vere edita, & amplissimo Cardinali Carolo Borromeo dicata*—“The Life of Saint Jerome, previously reported falsely by Erasmus, now truly brought to light by Mariano Vittori of Rieti based on his writings and dedicated to the most distinguished Cardinal Carlo Borromeo.”¹⁹⁴ The title accumulates credit for Vittori in three ways. First, his biography claims

¹⁹¹ *Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Dillingen: Sebaldus Mayer, 1562), b4v-b5v, b7r-b8v, c4r, c5v-c6v.

¹⁹² Morisi Guerra, “La leggenda di san Girolamo,” 28.

¹⁹³ Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre*, 104.

¹⁹⁴ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3 vols. (Rome: Paolo Manuzio, 1564-1565), 1: a1r.

to supplant that of Erasmus. Second, it is superior to Erasmus' false biography because Vittori has reliably mined Jerome's writings. Third, it invokes the patronage of the influential and renowned Cardinal Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan and nephew of Pius IV.

Vittori condemns Erasmus' biography without ever pointing out where exactly Erasmus went astray. That the Italian editor contented himself with a blanket condemnation contrasts with the penchant in his *scholia* for castigating Erasmus whenever possible. His title might lead readers to think that everything about Erasmus' *Vita* was erroneous. By assailing Erasmus only in his title, Vittori not only robbed himself of the opportunity of demonstrating where in particular he had improved on Erasmus but also in effect directed attention away from the places where his account of Jerome's life cohered with that of Erasmus.

Since Vittori and Erasmus both made Jerome's writings their principal sources, convergences between the two biographies should not come as a surprise. At a young age, Vittori writes, Jerome acquired "the rudiments of Christian piety"—the same phrase that Erasmus used—along with his liberal education.¹⁹⁵ Donatus taught him at Rome, but not Victorinus, Vittori insists. Jerome read "Porphry's *Isagoge*, translated the commentaries of Alexander (of Aphrodisias), and perused Plato and Aristotle, in fact, all the philosophers and all the poets." As a youth he lost his virginity before he was baptized. His two letters to Damasus (epp. 15, 16) prove that he was baptized in Rome. At Trier he copied out Hilary's *On Synods*.¹⁹⁶ After his Gallic travels, he returned to his two homelands, where he was born and where he was reborn: *utramque, ut par est credere, reuiscit patriam, tam scilicet eam, in qua natus, quam illam in qua renatus fuerat*. This echoes Erasmus' statement: *utramque reuiscit patriam, et eam in qua natus fuerat, et eam in qua renatus*.¹⁹⁷ The two biographies, furthermore, share a hagiographical impulse. Vittori represents Jerome as *Divus Hieronymus, vir sanctus, vir sanctissimus, and vir beatissimus*.¹⁹⁸ He breathes not a word about the lion or about Jerome as cardinal.

¹⁹⁵ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos* (1564-1565), 1: a1r; *Erasmii Opuscula*, 140.

¹⁹⁶ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a1r-a2r.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1: a2r; *Erasmii Opuscula*, 144.

¹⁹⁸ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a4r, a5v, a6r, a6v, b1v (*Divus Hieronymus*, usually abbreviated to *D. Hieronymus*), a5r, a6r, b1v, b2v (*vir sanctus*), a4v (*vir sanctissimus*), b3r (*vir beatissimus* and *beatissimus vir*).

Morisi Guerra too sharply contrasted Vittori's and Erasmus' depiction of Jerome the monk. While Vittori emphasized Jerome's motivation for embracing solitude, Erasmus underlined the benefits for a life dedicated to study. True, in discussing the first sojourn in Syria, Vittori suggests that Jerome endured the desert to fight temptation and quotes at length from ep. 22 to support his opinion. Yet in the context of the second sojourn, Vittori presents the model monk as disciplining the body with fasting and nourishing the mind with study and the spirit with prayer. When Jerome was not praying, he was reading and *vice versa*. Erasmus' Jerome planned to withdraw from society to devote himself to sacred studies and Christ. Ancient monasticism certainly had its advantages: spiritual freedom, freedom from the burden of family relationships, exemption from civil responsibilities, and limited subjection to episcopal tyranny. Yet Jerome's first objective was to lament the sins of his youth. Through a rigorous asceticism he subdued his rebellious flesh. He divided his time between study and prayer.¹⁹⁹

The Italian editor's disagreements with Erasmus are evident at the outset. After recording Jerome's birthplace, he identifies Strido with Strigna. Previous claims that Jerome was born in the reign of Constantine (d. 337) are false. He was born under Constantius II, Constantine's son and successor, who ruled for twenty-four years after the death of his father. Vittori quotes the passage from the *Commentary on Habakkuk* where Jerome writes that he heard of the Emperor Julian's death when he was a boy at school. Since Julian perished twenty-six years after Constantine (in 363), it makes sense that Jerome should have been born under Constantius II.²⁰⁰

The precise location of Jerome's hometown and the year of his birth remain debated topics. Georg Grützmacher believed that Jerome was born in the 340s in the region of Grahovo polje (in modern Montenegro). After a more penetrating look at the evidence, Francesco Bulic argued that Strido belonged to Dalmatia (in modern Croatia.) Cavallera disagreed, contending that Strido was close to Aquileia in Italy and was not Sdrigna. His detailed review of Jerome's writings led him to the conclusion that he was most likely born in

¹⁹⁹ Morisi Guerra, "La leggenda di san Girolamo," 30; *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a2v-a3r, a6r; *Erasmi Opuscula*, 145-46, 151.

²⁰⁰ Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a1r; Jerome: CCSL 76A: 645.

347. Analyzing the sources more than 50 years later, Alan Booth maintained that Jerome was born either in the second half of 347 or early in 348. Kelly clung to 331 and the authority of the *Chronicle* of Prosper of Aquitaine, which must have been Erasmus' source. Erasmus, like Prosper, related that Jerome died in his ninety-first year in 422. Vittori cited Prosper but was not sure at what age and when Jerome died.²⁰¹

In contrast to Erasmus, who wrote that Jerome did not indicate whether or not his father was wealthy, Vittori maintains that his parents were wealthy and "blessed with a large estate." As evidence he quotes a passage from the *Apology against Rufinus* in which Jerome remembers how as a boy he tore through the rooms of the slaves, played on holidays, and was dragged away from his grandmother's lap for lessons with his tutor. Vittori obviously presumed, reasonably enough, if Jerome's family owned slaves and engaged a tutor for the boy, it must have been prosperous. Modern scholarship has sustained Vittori's inference.²⁰² Erasmus stated that Bonosus "flew on ahead of Jerome" into eremitic solitude, but Vittori contradicts what has been written about the prior departure of Bonosus, writing that he went in search of solitude when Jerome was already living in the Syrian desert.²⁰³ Vittori clearly made progress by bringing to light the facts about Jerome's ordination. On the strength of a comment in Jerome's *Apology against John of Jerusalem*, he rightly concluded that Bishop Paulinus of Antioch ordained Jerome a priest.²⁰⁴ Unlike Erasmus, Vittori gives voice to Jerome's lament over the sack of Rome in 410.²⁰⁵ He acknowledges the controversy between Augustine and

²⁰¹ Georg Grützmacher, *Hieronymus: eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte* (1901-1908; repr., Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1986), 1: 105-106; Francesco Bulic, "Stridone luogo natale di S. Girolamo," in *Miscellanea Geronimiana*, 253-330; Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 2: 67-71, 1-10; Alan D. Booth, "The Date of Jerome's Birth," *Phoenix* 33 (1979): 346-53; Kelly, *Jerome*, 1, 337-39; *Erasmii Opuscula*, 170; *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: b3r.

²⁰² Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a1r; Jerome: CCSL 79: 30; Grützmacher, *Hieronymus*, 1: 109; Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 1: 3-4; P. Antin, *Essai sur Saint Jérôme* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1951), 11; Kelly, *Jerome*, 6; Stefan Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: prosopographische und sozialologische Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992), 22.

²⁰³ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 146; *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a2r.

²⁰⁴ Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a3v; Jerome: CCSL 79A: 79.

²⁰⁵ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: b2r. Godin, "Érasme biographie patristique," 700, considered Erasmus' silence about the sack of Rome as an "astonishing omission."

Jerome but assigns blame to no one. The love of Christ subdued their discord. Vittori does not belittle Augustine in order to exalt Jerome.²⁰⁶ His treatment of Rufinus' controversy with Jerome is objectively brief. Instead of attacking Rufinus, Vittori manages to call him a "religious man."²⁰⁷ Erasmus repeated the claim without espousing it that Jerome's bones were brought to Rome and mentioned that a monument to him was still to be seen in Santa Maria Maggiore. This was the monument displaying scenes from Jerome's life that Cardinal Guillaume d'Estouteville, the basilica's archpriest, commissioned in the 1460s. It was dismantled at the behest of Pope Sixtus V (1585-1590) to make way for the construction of the spacious Sistine Chapel in the basilica. Erasmus would not speak of Jerome's miracles. Vittori restricts himself to pointing out that the man whom neither Greeks nor Latins could rival was "renowned for many miracles" and reports the transfer of Jerome's remains to Rome as a fact. He adds that Pius II offered a plenary indulgence for all those who visited his tomb on 9 May, the day of the translation of his bones.²⁰⁸

A telling departure from his usual relish for quoting Jerome, Vittori reduces the account of his dream to a paraphrase. So sick that he seemed at the point of death, Jerome was carried away to the judgment seat of Christ. He was severely flogged for reading Cicero. Vittori stops there. He omits Jerome's oath. His focus is on Jerome's physical sufferings and privations and temptations and soon enough he quotes, like his medieval predecessors, the long passage from ep. 22 in which Jerome describes what he endured in the waste of Syria. Morisi Guerra justifiably concluded that Vittori's hasty treatment of the dream betrayed a certain amount of embarrassment.²⁰⁹ Compared to Erasmus' confrontation with the view that the point of the story was to bar Christians from reading secular books, Vittori's

²⁰⁶ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: b1v.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1: b1r, b3r.

²⁰⁸ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 170-71; *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: b2v-b3r. On the monument, see Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 56-57, and Steven F. Ostrow, *Art and Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Rome: The Sistine and Pauline Chapels in S. Maria Maggiore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 26. Pius II confirmed the indulgence first on 21 January 1459 and a second time on 1 June 1464. See Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 64.

²⁰⁹ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a2v-a3r; Morisi Guerra, "La leggenda di san Girolamo," 32.

evasive strategy seems cowardly. Much later he sounds an Erasmusian note. Pointing to the value for the Church of Jerome's expertise in Hebrew, he asks: Was not Abraham proficient in the wisdom of the Chaldeans and Moses in that of the Egyptians? And should not a Christian "be allowed for the benefit of the Church to collect and choose, like a buzzing bee, what is good and right from every source?"²¹⁰

Vittori's Jerome, much like that of Erasmus, was the foe of heretics. He harassed heretics so thoroughly that their heresies, as it were, vanished into thin air.²¹¹ This was a devoutly Roman Jerome, however, whose *Romanitas* suggested a confessionalized hue in Vittori's biographical portrait. For Vittori Rome was the Apostolic See, the centre of the true faith. Erasmus, not Vittori, claimed that Jerome recognized an "ancient paganism" in Rome and that young people were inadequately protected among the allurements of the city so that somewhere he calls it Babylon. The reference is to Jerome's letter to Asella (ep. 45).²¹²

Vittori imagines a discussion, presented as fact, between Jerome and the three factions of the Antiochene schism, each with its own bishop. At issue was whether one should believe that there were one or three hypostases in God. Vittori describes Jerome as founded upon that rock against which, according to Christ's promise, the gates of hell would not prevail, conscious of having received the faith and baptism in Rome, and determined to believe what the Roman Church believed and to die, as he was born, at one with that Church. To the contending parties he stated that he was very well aware that "outside this ark" at the time of the great flood safety or salvation (*salus*) was impossible and that anyone who did not eat the lamb "in this house" was profane. Here Vittori has borrowed from Jerome's first letter to Pope Damasus (ep. 15). Everyone in Antioch replied that they were in agreement with the Roman Church. Yet since they could not all believe what the Roman Church believed, Jerome appealed to Damasus, imploring him to declare what he should

²¹⁰ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a6v.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1: a6r.

²¹² *Erasmii Opuscula*, 145; Jerome: CSEL 54: 327.

believe and with which party in Antioch he should be in communion.²¹³

Vittori embellishes Jerome's return to Rome from Syria. He must have had in mind Jerome's comment about his initial reception in Rome upon his return:

Before I had become a familiar at the home of holy Paula, the entire city sang my praises. In the opinion of almost everyone I was deemed worthy of the office of bishop (*dignus summo sacerdotio*). Damasus, of blessed memory, and I spoke with one voice. I was called holy; I was called humble and eloquent.²¹⁴

Vittori writes that everyone, men and women, rushed together to greet Jerome, vying for his attention. Chaste matrons, citizens, and priests could not get enough of him. Some delighted in his holiness, others in his learning or his affability and refinement. The dignity of his priesthood, the purity of his speech, his proficiency in languages, and his knowledge of the Scriptures commended him to various people, but all welcomed, acclaimed, and praised him equally. Words can scarcely express how much Damasus appreciated Jerome. He knew of him from his letters and from his tremendous reputation for moral probity and for an amazing asceticism. Jerome was a second Paul to his role as Peter. To him, consummately learned and thoroughly orthodox, Damasus entrusted all matters of faith and religion. This would help the pope determine what should and should not be believed, responding to the enquiries, especially from synods, that daily from all over the world poured into Rome, the mother of all churches and the Apostolic See.²¹⁵

Jerome's administrative service to the Apostolic See was not an obstacle to his spiritual life. He celebrated Mass, Vittori insists. On his deathbed, Nepotian, knowing that Jerome lacked the proper ritual garment, donated to him an appropriate vestment. Vittori quotes from the epitaph on Nepotian addressed to Heliodorus (ep. 60) in which Jerome recalls Nepotian's request to send him the tunic that he used "in the ministry of Christ." Yet, as Morisi Guerra suggested, Vittori has quoted Jerome out of context. The sentence that immediately precedes the quoted passage gives it a different mean-

²¹³ Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a3r; Jerome: CSEL 54: 64.

²¹⁴ CSEL 54: 325.

²¹⁵ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a4r-a4v.

ing. Jerome prefaces the reference to Nepotian's gift with a comment about the dying man's remembrance of their friendship and his recollection of "the sweetness of studies."²¹⁶ If, Vittori continues, Jerome in his *Dialogue against the Pelagians* wrote that God was pleased when bishops, priests, and deacons went to the offering of sacrifices in clean robes, what should we think of how Jerome discharged his priestly office—that "most holy man" who yielded to no one when it came to vindicating God's honour and defending the beauty of the Church?²¹⁷

Vittori emphasizes what Jerome did while residing in Rome: *Romae manens Hieronymus*. He recounts Jerome's literary labours in Rome. He wrote against Helvidius the heretic and addressed the pamphlet on the preservation of virginity to Eustochium (ep. 22). At the behest of Damasus he translated Didymus' treatise on the Holy Spirit. He consoled Paula on the death of Blesilla (ep. 39) and wrote exegetical essays for Marcella and Damasus and, again at the pope's request, translated Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. Finally, in Rome Jerome converted many who had been captive to vice—Vittori does not identify any of these converts—and set before several matrons, including Marcella, Melania, Asella, Albina, Marcellina, and especially Paula, a method for leading a holier life.²¹⁸

Clearly, Vittori's Jerome is less exemplary than that of Erasmus, and his text is more decidedly biographical.²¹⁹ His advances in accuracy and objectivity make for a less interesting performance in Rice's opinion.²²⁰ Apart from mentioning that Jerome, after his baptism, turned his mind to theology and that his first missive to Heliodorus was a "most eloquent letter,"²²¹ Vittori does not explicitly and emphatically identify Jerome as a theologian, or a doctor of the Church, or a paragon of eloquence. For Erasmus it was a matter of course that Jerome was orthodox and a foe of heretics. Vittori modulates this perspective into a confessionalized key, emphasizing Jerome's loyalty and service to the Roman Church. Despite the con-

²¹⁶ Ibid., 1: a4v; Morisi Guerra, "La leggenda di san Girolamo," 32; Jerome: CSEL 54: 565.

²¹⁷ Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a4v; Jerome: CCSL 80: 38.

²¹⁸ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a4v-a5r.

²¹⁹ Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre*, 104.

²²⁰ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 155.

²²¹ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1564-1565), 1: a1v, a2v.

fessionalized refashioning of Jerome and the historiographical improvements, Vittori's biography stood in the wake of the supposedly aberrant biography by Erasmus. The Italian editor not only employed the methodology of his predecessor; he may also have borrowed some of his ideas. Did Vittori denounce Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi* as a false report to conceal his own debt to it?

Iconographical Excursus

In 1522, shortly after the death of Johann Reuchlin on 30 June, Erasmus published his colloquy *De incomparabili heroe Ioanne Reuchlino in divorum numerum relato*—*On the Incomparable Hero Johann Reuchlin, taken up into the Company of the Saints*.²²² Brassicanus tells Pompilius of a vision that a friend, a Franciscan friar, unfolded to him. In a dream, the Franciscan saw how St. Jerome escorted Reuchlin into the celestial meadows. Brassicanus relates this exchange with the Franciscan:

“Tell me,” I said, “just what did Jerome look like? How was he dressed? Was he as old as they paint him, or was he wearing a cowl, or the hat and mantle of a cardinal, or did he have his lion with him?” “Nothing of the sort,” he replied. “His appearance was pleasant; it showed his age, but in such a way that he didn’t look run-down but quite dignified. And what need had he there of the lion those painters have added as his companion? He wore an ankle-length robe you’d describe as transparent crystal, like the one he presented to Reuchlin. It was decorated all over with tongues in a threefold variety of colours: some showed bronze, others emerald, others sapphire; all were dazzling and were arranged in a way that added no little beauty.”

Pompilius imagines that the decoration of Jerome's robe symbolized the three languages—Latin, Greek, and Hebrew—in which Jerome and Reuchlin were experts. Brassicanus agrees, since the borders of the robe “seemed to be inscribed in the three languages, in three different colours.”²²³

The passage in the colloquy is an iconographical statement. Here “Erasmus censures the traditional iconography” of Jerome,²²⁴ but he

²²² CWE 39: 245. I have preferred a more literal translation of the colloquy's title to that of CWE: *The Apotheosis of that Incomparable Worthy, Johann Reuchlin*.

²²³ CWE 39: 249.

²²⁴ Morisi Guerra, “La leggenda di san Girolamo,” 21.

also imagines an alternative, humanist, representation, one in which Jerome serves as the exemplar of the study of the three chief ancient languages. Artists must have been too beholden to the iconographical tradition to take a cue from Erasmus and give Jerome a new image. Who might have recognized this new Jerome?

By 1522 Jerome had enjoyed an impressive iconographical career. He emerged in the Carolingian era as the Christian sage, particularly the monk who translated the Bible. In the fourteenth century, the monk became a cardinal. Giovanni d'Andrea prescribed in the *Hieronimianus* that the saint should appear seated, his cardinal's hat (*galero*) to one side and the lion at his feet. Jerome as the penitent in the wilderness became in a variety of motifs the principal image of the saint in the fifteenth century. Jerome the penitent stood or knelt, often outside a grotto, beating his exposed chest with a stone. Increasingly after 1450 he knelt before a crucifix. By mid-century artists in the Veneto began portraying him as reading the Bible in the wilderness.²²⁵ This more scholarly depiction appealed to Quattrocento humanists.²²⁶ Images of the penitent in the wilderness were in part indebted to Jerome's description of his penance and austerity in the desert in ep. 22. Millard Meiss linked the iconographical theme to the rise in the second half of the fourteenth century of monastic communities that took Jerome as their patron. Christiane Wiebel preferred not to limit the popularity of the ascetic Jerome to his Hieronymite emulators but attributed it to a broader valorization of asceticism, including Franciscan piety, the demand for reform of the clergy and religious orders, and the growth of observant movements within these orders.²²⁷ Whereas Daniel Russo viewed the inclusion of the *galero* and of the lion at the periphery of images of the penitent Jerome as outmoded iconographical vestiges, clichés that recalled an earlier era, Wiebel saw the casting aside of the *galero* as

²²⁵ Daniel Russo, *Saint Jérôme en Italie: étude d'iconographie et de spiritualité (XIII^e-XV^e siècle)* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte; Rome: École française de Rome, 1987), 27-35, 60-65, 201-221. On Giovanni d'Andrea's iconographical prescription see also Bernhard Ridderbos, *Saint and Symbol: Images of Saint Jerome in Early Italian Art* (Groningen: Bouma's Boekhuis, 1984), 19; and Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 65.

²²⁶ Ridderbos, *Saint and Symbol*, 31.

²²⁷ Millard Meiss, "Scholarship and Penitence in the Early Renaissance: The Image of St. Jerome," in Meiss, *The Painter's Choice: Problems in the Interpretation of Renaissance Art* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 191-92; Christiane Wiebel, *Askese und Endlichkeitsdemut in der italienischen Renaissance: ikonologische Studien zum Bild des heiligen Hieronymus* (Weinheim: VCH, Acta Humaniora, 1988), 18-64.

a symbol of ascetic humility.²²⁸ A product of the second half of the fourteenth century, the image of Jerome in his study appeared less frequently than the hundreds of penitential Jeromes. Closeted away with his books, Jerome served as the icon of humanist scholarship. “Renaissance pictures of St. Jerome in his study,” Rice maintained, “make visible a humanist vision of Christian antiquity and celebrate a Christocentric, evangelical, and learned piety nourished on study of the Bible.”²²⁹

Manuscript and printed collections of Jerome’s letters presented images of the saint as well as frescos, altarpieces, and Books of Hours. To be sure, not all *epistolaria* allowed readers to see Jerome as well as to read him. Those that did reflected iconographical currents. The prevailing motif of the penitent Jerome competed with representations of Jerome the scholar or doctor.

In manuscript *epistolaria* the saint usually appeared in the historiated initial of the first text and/or in the illuminated borders of the folio that presented the first text of the volume. Images of Jerome appear most frequently in fifteenth-century manuscripts. Some Italian manuscripts show him in the historiated initial, accompanied by his lion with or without his red *galero* nearby, kneeling before a crucifix in the act of beating his bloodied chest with a stone.²³⁰ The border of one these manuscripts also presents Jerome in his red cardinal’s robe reading at his desk and as a monk in a brown habit removing the thorn from the lion’s paw.²³¹ In a collection of letters completed in Florence in 1464, Jerome in his study wearing a grey habit with no lion or red garments in sight cuts a far less legendary figure.²³² An *epistolarium* in two volumes completed in Rome in 1468 visualizes Jerome in several guises: the lion’s healer, the penitent in the wilderness, the cardinal writing in his study, the hermit reading in his cave.²³³

The beautiful opening page of an Italian codex of 1444 conveys Jerome’s authority majestically (figure 1, frontispiece).²³⁴ He looks

²²⁸ Russo, *Saint Jérôme en Italie*, 211; Wiebel, *Askese und Endlichkeitsdemut*, 45.

²²⁹ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 104, 113 (quotation).

²³⁰ BAV, Urb. lat. 51, 7r (without *galero*); BML, Plut. XIX, Cod. 11, 3r (with *galero*); Plut. XIX, Cod. 12, 5r (without *galero*).

²³¹ BML, Plut. XIX, Cod. 12, 5r.

²³² Beinecke, MS 932, 1r.

²³³ BNF, Lat. 8910, 5r; Lat. 8911, 5r.

²³⁴ HAB, 12. Aug. fol., 1r.

out at the reader from the initial D of *Domino* in the greeting of a letter to Augustine (ep. 115). His authority rests upon his public role as doctor of the Church, not as a scholar busy reading or writing in private. In his right hand, Cardinal St. Jerome holds open a book with the words *Dominus fecit*—"The Lord has made [it]"—barely visible on the left page; his left hand holds aloft a church. He sits on a bench, his feet, hidden behind his red gown, resting on a platform that seems to be hovering above the ground. Women and men kneel devoutly on either side. The lion pokes out his head on Jerome's right. In the foreground, a woman holds a scroll and a man holds up an open book. A powerful variation of the iconography prescribed by Giovanni d'Andrea, the image easily constructs the relationship between Jerome, an elevated authority, and his readers, who humbly submit to his teaching. As the image of the bottom of the page shows, the saint can also put aside the symbols of his authority and assume the humility of his devotees. His *galero* slung on a wooden support for a roof, the saint kneels in solitude outside his cave, holding a rosary in one hand and beating his chest with the other. The addition of a crucifix would give direction to his penitent humility and would create a parallel of submission to the larger image at the top of the page. The reader's eye falls first on Jerome the holy doctor, to whom the penitent saint is subordinated in space and size.

Almost fifty years after the completion of this manuscript, Albrecht Dürer's first illustration of Jerome, the first of thirteen and his first woodcut (figure 6), appeared on the title page of the edition of Jerome's letters printed by Kesler in Basel in 1492.²³⁵ It re-appeared in Kesler's 1497 printing and was copied in the edition printed by Jacques Saccon in Lyon in 1508. The image "is the very first woodcut representation of Jerome as *vir trilinguis*, the master of the three holy languages and the inspiration of the new philology."²³⁶ It is also the first portrait of Jerome to appear in a printed edition of his letters. The cardinal in his study pauses to remove the thorn from the lion's paw. Prominent in the woodcut is his Latin translation of the Bible. He has translated the opening lines of Genesis directly from the *Hebraica veritas*. The Greek Septuagint version lies open for consultation at his left. We could say that Dürer's Jerome corresponds

²³⁵ David Hotchkiss Price, *Albrecht Dürer's Renaissance: Humanism, Reformation, and the Art of Faith* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 199.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 200-201.



Fig. 6. Albrecht Dürer, woodcut of Cardinal Jerome, pausing from his work of translating the Bible to remove a thorn from the paw of a lion, *Liber epistolarum sancti Hieronimi* (Basel: Nicolaus Kesler, 1497), verso of the title page. Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

to two of the three Lellian categories for arranging Jerome's letters, perpetuated in the *epistolarium* printed by Kesler: the teacher of the faith vested as a cardinal and the exegete.

Another woodcut of Jerome by Dürer (figure 7), executed in 1512, found its way onto the verso of the title page of Spengler's translation of the *De morte Hieronymi* (1514). The image presents traditional iconographical elements, such as the lion and the cardinal's regalia resting near the crucifix. Although he holds a pen on an opened book, Jerome does not come across primarily as a writer. The accent is on Jerome the contemplative as the bearded man in the grotto fixes his gaze on the representation of Christ crucified.

The contemplative saint is the focus of an illustration (figure 8) that inaugurates each of the three parts of Saccon's 1518 printing of



Fig. 7. Albrecht Dürer, woodcut of St. Jerome the penitent writing in his cave, *Beschreibung des heyligen Bisschoffs Eusebii: der ain junger und discipel deß heyligen Sancti Hieronymi gewest ist zu dem Bischoff Damaso und dem Römer Theodosio von dem leben und sterben desselben heyligsten Hieronymi*, trans. Lazarus Spengler (Nürnberg: Hieronymus Hölzel, 1512), verso of the title page. Courtesy of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.



Fig. 8. Woodcut of St. Jerome the penitent, title page of Part 3 of *Epistole sancti Hieronymi* (Lyon: Jacques Saccon, 1518). Courtesy of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.

the *Epistole sancti Hieronymi*, the last collection of letters in the Lellian tradition. The interior space is not a study but an oratory, or at least a study transformed into an oratory. Half-naked, his cardinal's robe seemingly falling from his waist, Jerome kneels before a crucifix. The notice to the reader, held in place by two cherubs, makes clear that Jerome with his cardinal's headgear (*cardineo diademate*) shone brightly in the world. His writings, so often approved by Holy Church, proclaim the power of his genius. This is the eradicator of heresies, the vanquisher of false prophets. The edition, free of all defects, contains his sacred utterances.

Several editions of Canisius' anthology included various depictions of Jerome. The same image (figure 9) appears on the verso of the title page of the 1562 and 1565 editions. It is a slightly less refined, mirror-image reworking of Dürer's woodcut of 1512. The revised woodcut emphasizes the sanctity of the bearded contemplative. The nimbus makes this clear. The caption is more appropriate to an iconographical motif that dates back no earlier than 1400, namely Jerome hearing the angel sound the trumpet of the Last Judgment. A statement attributed to Jerome in the fifteenth century,²³⁷ the caption, translated, reads: "Whenever I consider that day, I tremble in my entire body. Whether I eat or drink or do something else, it always seems to me that that terrible trumpet sounds in my ears: 'Arise, ye dead, come to judgment.'" The woodcut, however, lacks an evident eschatological dimension. No skull distracts the saint's contemplation of the crucifix as it might have done in depictions of the penitent kneeling before a crucifix or in Dürer's famous engraving of 1514, when a skull first appeared in Jerome's study, or in subsequent depictions of Jerome.²³⁸

Erasmus and Vittori obviously believed that a literary portrait of Jerome was sufficient. Until and including 1565, no Erasmian edition of Jerome ever supplied a visual portrait of the Church Father. The same can be said for Vittori's first two editions of the letters and the first *opera omnia*. Given his frequent recourse to Jerome's writings in his biography, Vittori might have agreed with Erasmus that the act of reading generates a more intimate, lively, and reliable familiarity with an author than simple visual perception. To visualize Jerome,

²³⁷ Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 161-62.

²³⁸ Wiebel, *Askese und Endlichkeitsdemut*, 111; Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 111.



Fig. 9. Woodcut of St. Jerome the penitent writing in his cave, *Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis, eloquentissimi Ecclesiae Doctoris, in libros tres distributa*, ed. Peter Canisius (Dillingen: Sebaldus Mayer, 1562), verso of the title page. Courtesy of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.

particularly in a way that sixteenth-century readers would recognize, might run the risk of violating the principle of representing him, of bringing him to life, through ancient sources, especially his own writings. Visual representations are unnecessary distractions. They do not authorize texts; texts, in Erasmus' opinion, and texts alone vouch for an author. The true miracles lie in Jerome's writings. All else is *fabulamentum*.

The power of images was irresistible, however. Images of Jerome asserted themselves in later printings of Vittori's *opera omnia* editions, beginning with the one published by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp in 1578-1579 (figure 10). On the verso of the initial title page, Jerome in the central panel appears with traditional iconographical identity tags: books, the *galero* hanging on the wall, the crucifix, the lion, and the skull. Two miniatures above and below the main image recall Cardinal Jerome's favour for the lion and the penitent in the wilderness. On the title page of the 1616 Cologne edition (figure 11), the bare-headed penitent, standing partially in the shadow of Pope Gregory the Great must share the central stage with his mitred colleagues in the tetrarchy of Latin Christendom's principal doctors of the faith, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory. It is curious that the object of the edition should occupy a peripheral visual representation on the title page unless one of the unidentified supernal figures near the lion is also meant to be Jerome. Cardinal Jerome returns to prominence in an engraving on the verso of the initial title page of the 1643 edition printed in Paris (figure 12).

What Vittori might have called the false report that Jerome was a cardinal, of which Erasmus was innocent, endured iconographically despite Erasmus' explicit and Vittori's implicit repudiation of the claim. Cornelius Schulting in his *Confessio Hieronymiana* (1585) held out against all gainsayers that Jerome was a cardinal priest. The inaccuracy of artists in portraying Jerome in the medieval regalia of a cardinal does not disprove this (supposed) fact.²³⁹ Jean Martianay's edition finally did away with the legendary iconographical accretions. In the first volume, published in 1693, we see St. Jerome, the biblical scholar, alone with his books, writing out the passage from the *De viris illustribus* in which he asserts that he translated the New Testament out of Greek and the Old Testament out of Hebrew (figure 13). Seen from an Erasmian perspective, this Jerome reflects the merger of textual production and the *persona* of the accomplished Christian man of letters.

²³⁹ Cornelius Schulting, ed., *Confessio Hieronymiana* (Cologne: Birckmann, 1585), 84r-84v.

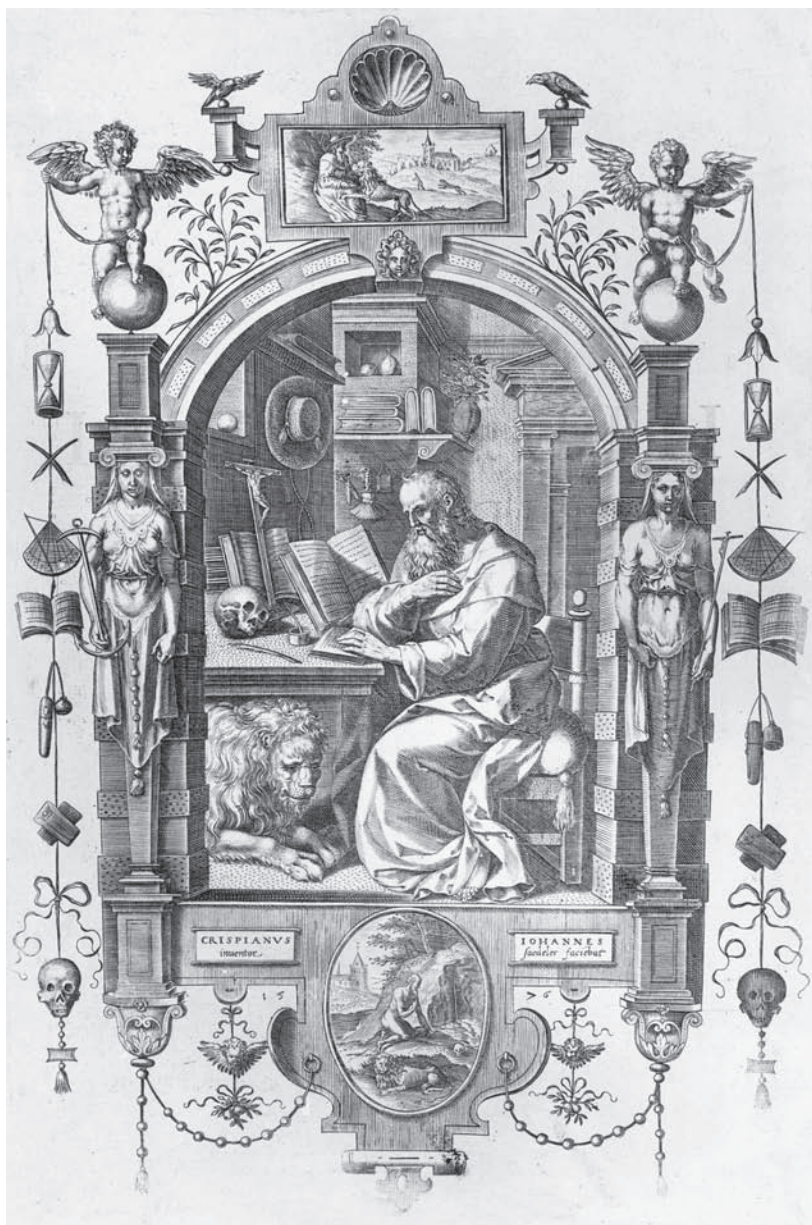


Fig. 10. Three images of Jerome: Cardinal Jerome extracting the thorn from the lion's paw (top), the devout scholar in his study (middle), the penitent in the wilderness (bottom), *Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis opera*, ed Mariano Vittori, 9 vols. (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1578-1579), 1: verso of title page. Courtesy of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.



Fig. 11. Title page, vol. 1 of *Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia*, ed. Mariano Vittori, 9 vols. (Cologne: Anton Hierat, 1616). Courtesy of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.



Fig. 12. Engraving of the devout and learned Cardinal St. Jerome, *Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis Opera*, ed. Mariano Vittori, 9 vols. (Paris: Cramoisy, 1643), 1: verso of the title page. Courtesy of the Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Li 2° 76.



Fig. 13. Engraving of St. Jerome the biblical scholar, *Sancti Hieronymi operum tomus primus*, ed. Jean Martianay (Paris: Louis Roulland, 1693), second folio recto. Courtesy of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.

Conclusion

Megan Hale Williams proclaimed “that the temptation to write a biography of Jerome is one that the sensible historian will firmly resist.” To what sources would such an historian turn? No contemporary or near-contemporary composed a biography of Jerome. The most contemporary sources are those produced by Jerome himself. His writings are abundant, but “we know that the collection we have is incomplete and has been shaped by its author’s deliberate editorial control.”²⁴⁰ Similarly, Vessey cautioned: “What we see, allowing for accidents of transmission and perspective, is what we were meant to get; the edition of the author and the edition of the work are inseparable.”²⁴¹ The identification of Jerome with his writings did not deter serious modern scholars like Cavallera and Kelly from writing still authoritative biographies. Nor did it give pause to Jerome’s pre-modern admirers. In his essay on the adage ‘Herculean labours,’ Erasmus made clear that one of his difficult tasks in editing Jerome was constructing “the life of the most holy man out of all his own writings” when others had produced biographies that were not only extremely useless but also highly absurd.²⁴²

Jerome was what he wrote. That was not simply the message of Erasmus and Vittori but also of Marcellinus Comes and of Jerome’s medieval biographers, even if medieval *vitae* went beyond Jerome’s scripts, fabricating pious stories about him in order to show that the scholar was also a saint. For the “hack” who composed the three forged letters, Jerome’s writings obviously did not help to glorify him enough. Erasmus removed glorious Jerome from one pedestal, only to place him on another. He directed attention towards Jerome the writer and away from Jerome the thaumaturge. Erasmus’ readers were to require no miracles other than Jerome’s texts. From these Erasmus produced the extraordinary doctor of the Church, the incomparable theologian, the exemplar of Christian eloquence who stood for the humanist belief that learning and piety could flourish together and that Christian theologians could eloquently communicate the truths of Scripture.

²⁴⁰ Williams, *The Monk and the Book*, 263.

²⁴¹ Mark Vessey, “Erasmus’ Jerome: The Publishing of a Christian Author,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 14 (1994): 76.

²⁴² ASD II-5: 40.

Why did Erasmus write the *Vita Hieronymi*? It certainly gives Jerome an exemplary function. He becomes the model of the “perfect humanist” and “the portrait of the true theologian.”²⁴³ With his literary portrait Erasmus could pursue “his aim to revitalize theological study, to restore the true *theologia*—the *vera theologia*—of the early Church. In this endeavor Jerome led the way and represented the goal.”²⁴⁴

Yet it is important to remember that the *Vita* was not primarily intended as a separate document, a text independent of Erasmus’ edition of Jerome. The biography was, as Clausi has reminded us, not part of the original plan for the edition as Erasmus had outlined in letters before the edition’s publication, including the three letters of 1515 addressed to Leo X and Cardinals Grimani and Riario. Clausi concludes that Erasmus most likely composed the *Vita* while the edition was in press.²⁴⁵ Erasmus composed it expressly for the edition. As such, the *Vita* fulfills a prefatory or paratextual function.

Bussi had inaugurated the prefatory function of Jerome’s biography with the inclusion of the *Plerosque nimirum* at the beginning of his edition. Other printings followed suit, such as the *epistolaria* printed in Parma (1480), Venice (1488), Basel (1489, 1492), Nürnberg (1495), and Paris (1512). Yet Bussi practically disqualified the ninth-century *vita* by indicating that it was unworthy of Jerome. Did the story of the lion dissatisfy him? If the biography failed to do Jerome justice, why include it? It is tempting to imagine that Erasmus composed his biography in order to respond to a convention in printing Jerome’s letters and to replace the *Plerosque nimirum*.

If the aim of a preface is “to get the book read and to get the book read properly,”²⁴⁶ then Erasmus’ biography achieves this aim emphatically. His *Vita Hieronymi* serves at one and the same time as an introduction, a way into Jerome’s writings, especially the letters, and as an exhortation to read Jerome as brought back to life in Erasmus’ edition, unadorned by any visual portraits. Those with a taste for miracles need look no further. They will find them in the texts gathered

²⁴³ Coppens, “Le portrait de saint Jérôme,” 823.

²⁴⁴ Olin, “Erasmus and Saint Jerome,” 44.

²⁴⁵ Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre*, 94–95.

²⁴⁶ Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 197, emphasis in the original.

together by Erasmus. Those who want to encounter Jerome as he really was should forge ahead in the edition. Now at the revival of *bonae litterae* throughout Christendom and the awakening of minds to “that ancient and authentic theology,” it was time to embrace Jerome, to become familiar with him, to browse through him, to absorb him.²⁴⁷ The *Vita* expresses Erasmus’ command: *tolle, lege*. Owing to this long paratext, the reader should not simply take and read Jerome but see reflected in his texts the Erasmian portrait of the eminent doctor of the Church, the consummate scholar, the eloquent writer, the model theologian. If the biographical preface is the key to understanding Jerome’s writings,²⁴⁸ it remains to be seen to what extent Erasmus’ commentary within the edition reinforces his portrait of Jerome.

²⁴⁷ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 190.

²⁴⁸ Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre*, 116-17.

CHAPTER FOUR

ELUCIDATING JEROME

The Placement and Functions of Paratexts

If Erasmus had not originally thought of writing a *Vita Hieronymi* for his edition, the *argumenta* and *scholia* were certainly part of his editorial plan. In the dedicatory letter to William Warham, he conceives of the *argumenta* as entrances to Jerome's treatises and letters, as "doors opening for those who wish to enter." The metaphor approximates Gérard Genette's concept of the paratext as a threshold, for, as Marie Maclean observed, "the liminal is most easily perceived as being associated with entry." Erasmus explains the significance of the *scholia* by employing a metaphor of light. He uses the verb *illustrare* to emphasize their enlightening or elucidatory purpose. For those whose "knowledge of languages and literature" is not sufficient "we have elucidated (*illustrauimus*) with the appended *scholia*" whatever might stand in the way of a reader of "modest learning."¹ John Olin summarized the philological illumination inherent in Erasmus' *scholia*: "They explain terms and figures of speech, they identify names and places, they indicate scriptural and literary allusions, they clarify obscurities, they give variants and discuss corrections in the text."² These elucidations have two advantages for Erasmus. First, whereas in the past not even the most erudite could read "so distinguished an author" as Jerome, now "the half-educated" could read him. Second, Erasmus' textual reconstruction of Jerome—"what has been restored by others"—will not as easily fall prey to corruption.³ With André Godin we might smile at this "beautiful optimism of the humanist, who believes in the perpetual integrity of words confined

¹ Allen 2: 219, ep. 396; Marie Maclean, "Pretexts and Paratexts: The Art of the Peripheral," *New Literary History* 22 (1991): 275.

² John C. Olin, "Erasmus and Saint Jerome: The Close Bond and Its Significance," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 7 (1987): 47.

³ Allen 2: 219, ep. 396.

by print.”⁴ Erasmus thus recommends his paratexts as facilitating the comprehension and preservation of Jerome’s texts.

The title of Vittori’s *scholia* in the first edition of the *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos* indicates various purposes: “The most learned *scholia* of Mariano Vittori of Rieti, professor of sacred theology, on all of St. Jerome’s letters, in which, besides an explanation of noteworthy things, more than one thousand mistakes, which Erasmus left behind in the disfigured letters, are removed, and six hundred errors of the same man have been refuted.”⁵ Vittori’s *scholia* do him credit. They are the product of his eminent scholarship, accredited by his academic title, and thus celebrate the erudition of this theology professor. The title mentions but passes over the explicatory function of the *scholia* in order to highlight the attack on Erasmus. If Vittori’s edition is to supplant that of Erasmus, the Italian editor must make it very clear to readers that his is the superior edition. By impugning Erasmus’ credibility Vittori’s *scholia* contain the proof of Vittori’s superior editorial talents.

Benedetto Clausi reports that “the *scholia* of Erasmus are much more numerous and in general shorter than those of Vittori.”⁶ The formal enumeration of *scholia*, text by text, in the third Erasmian edition of Jerome printed by Claude Chevallon in 1533-1534 and in Vittori’s edition printed by Sébastien Nivelle in 1578-1579 confirm the first part of Clausi’s claim. By my count, Erasmus produced 4,110 *scholia*, while Vittori managed 3,481. In Vittori’s first edition (1564-1565) of Jerome’s letters, his *scholia* occupy 176 folio pages. Vittori’s quantitative achievement becomes even more considerable when one takes into account his *Annotationes* on Jerome’s biblical commentaries. These first appeared in the Roman *opera omnia* (1571-1576). Appended at the end of the sixth volume, they fill 92 folio pages. Vittori did in fact write many extensive *scholia*, but the same can be said of Erasmus.

The *scholia* embody editorial scholarship *par excellence*, but, despite their staggering accumulation, they by no means exhaust editorial interventions in shedding light on Jerome’s correspondence and

⁴ André Godin, *Érasme, lecteur d’Origène* (Geneva: Droz, 1982), 242.

⁵ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3 vols. (Rome: Paolo Manuzio, 1564-1565), 3: 283.

⁶ Benedetto Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre: L’edizione erasmiana delle Lettere di Gerolamo* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2000), 243.

allied works. Combined, the *argumenta*, *antidoti*, and *scholia* form, according to Clausi, “a firmly cohesive ensemble from a structural perspective,...the wall supporting the entire Hieronymian edifice of Erasmus, the direct expression of his personal contribution.”⁷ The marginal commentary in the edition, though worthy of recognition, is relatively scant, unlike the many scriptural references that flank Jerome’s texts in Vittori’s edition.

Editorial structure for Jerome in print had scribal antecedents and first emerged in the *editio princeps* of the letters. Teodoro de’ Lelli’s detailed taxonomy placed at the beginning of the two volumes of his edition typographically punctuated in its various parts the gatherings of texts through the edition. His *argumenta* set at the head of individual texts prepared readers for what they would read. Succeeding editions of Jerome’s letters transmitted these *argumenta* to sixteenth-century readers even slightly beyond the Erasmian initiative of 1516 in the *epistolarium* printed by Jacques Saccon in Lyon in 1518. Erasmus’ paratextual innovation was to turn editing Jerome into a manifestly scholarly enterprise through the addition of *scholia*.

This innovation presented a typographical challenge. Where should the *scholia* appear? *Marginalia* obviously took their place on the shoulders of a page. As an introductory summary, it was logical for an *argumentum* to crown a text. Their placement brought these two species of paratext into a spatial relationship with Jerome’s writings that a reader could easily negotiate. It was more difficult to connect scores of *scholia* with the words or passages on which they depended.

In the first volume of the 1516 edition, Erasmus’ *argumenta* and *scholia* with one or more *antidoti*, if he decided to append them to a particular set of *scholia*, formed an elaborate superstructure for each letter (figure 14). The only exception was the opening letter of the volume, the missive to Heliodorus (ep. 14). In this case, the *argumentum*, two sets of *scholia*—the second a series of “purely rhetorical observations”⁸ under the heading *Artis Annotatio*, and three *antidoti* served as an extensive “understory of commentary,”⁹ spanning the

⁷ Ibid., 183.

⁸ Jacques Chomarat, *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Érasme*, 2 vols. (Paris: Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1981), 1: 536.

⁹ I have borrowed this expression from William W. E. Slights, *Managing Readers: Printed Marginalia in English Renaissance Books* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 51.

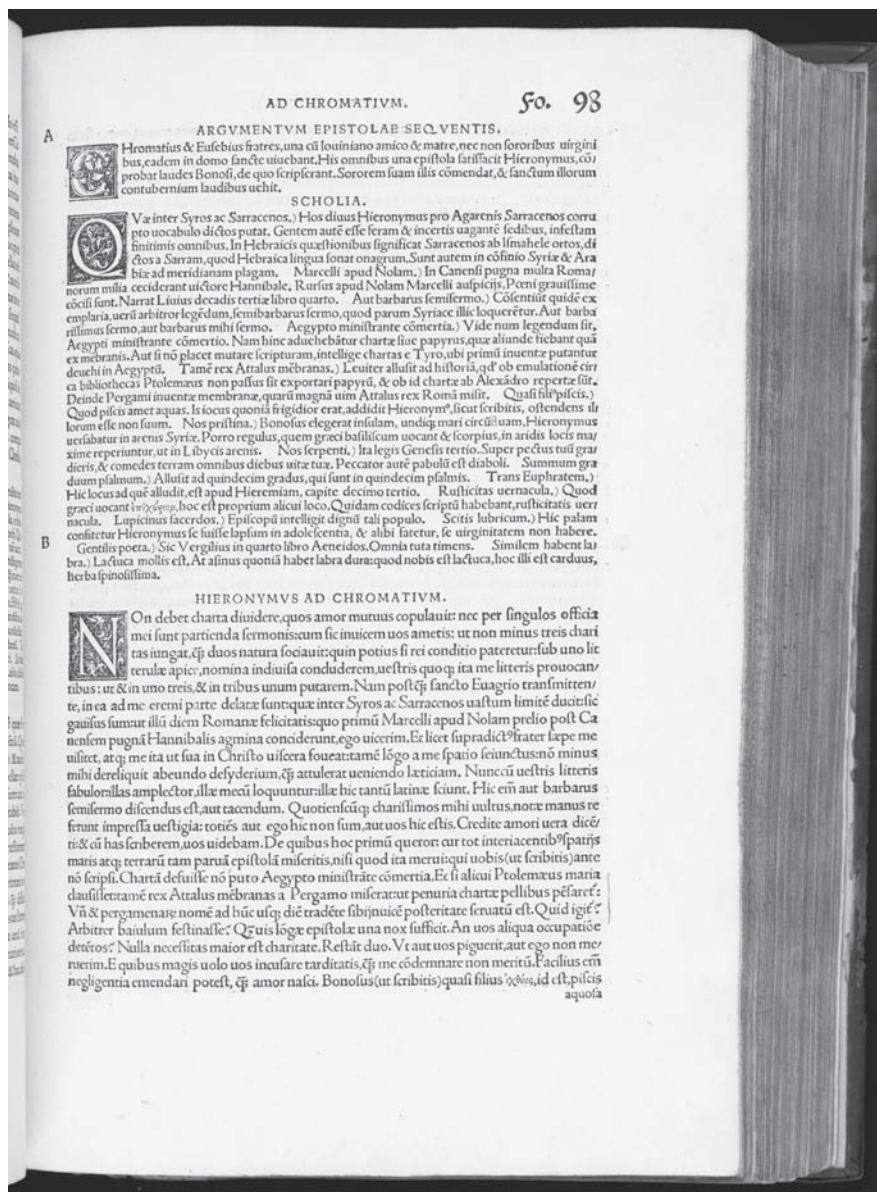


Fig. 14. The *argumentum* and *scholia* preceding Jerome's letter to Chromatius (and Jovinus and Eusebius) (ep. 7) in the first volume of Erasmus' edition of Jerome (Basel: Johann Froben, 1516), 98r. Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

equivalent of five folio pages, noticeably longer than the three and one-half folio pages occupied by the letter. Only a brief sentence functioning as a headnote informs the reader of the subject of the letter: "Jerome invites his companion Heliodorus to the desert."¹⁰ In the second volume, the *censurae* (discussed in Chapter 2) appeared as headnotes to the *spuria* . The format of the third and fourth volumes is different from the first. As a rule, the *argumentum* preceded the text while the *scholia* and occasional *antidoti* followed. When Erasmus offered only one or very few *scholia* , these appeared immediately after the *argumentum* and before the text. The general *mis en page* of the editorial apparatus in the third and fourth volumes became standard for all volumes of the genuine letters in subsequent Erasmian editions.

In the first edition, readers were left to their own devices in coordinating the lemmata that introduced the *scholia* to the relevant places within the texts. Readers could avail themselves of some limited assistance in the second edition. Arabic numerals printed in the margins in effect divided a text into sections. The same series of numerals appeared alongside the *scholia* . To match a lemma with the text one had to co-ordinate the numerical section of the *scholia* with that of the text. This system was better than no system, but the process of relating paratext and text could still be cumbersome. The third edition accelerated the process by turning the *scholia* into footnotes. Every lemma had its own numerical reference related by the same numeral to a place within the text. Unfortunately, Basel never adopted this Parisian experiment. The fourth edition of 1536-1537 and the re-issues of 1553 and 1565 returned to the system of the second edition.

When Vittori first published his edition of Jerome's letters, the *scholia* appeared *en masse* at the end of the third and final volume. Thus a vast distance separated text and commentary. Vittori's edition was the first to assign a specific number to Jerome's correspondence. The *scholia* were grouped according to epistle numbers or to the titles of treatises. By referring to the epistle numbers or titles and the folio (page) numbers of the text embedded in the commentary, readers could traverse the distance between paratext and text. In the second edition (1566), the *scholia* filled a separate, fourth, volume.

¹⁰ *Opera* (1516), I: 1r.

The first *opera omnia* edition (1572-1576) apportioned the *scholia* by volume: they appeared at the end of each of the first three volumes. Christopher Plantin reunited all the *scholia* at the end the third volume in the edition that he printed in Antwerp in 1578-1579, whereas Nivelles located and enumerated the *scholia* in the same way as Chevalon did in the third Erasmian edition.

Erasmus' and Vittori's *scholia* lend themselves to two methods of reading. One can read them discontinuously, referring back and forth between paratext and text. One can also read them continuously as a whole without necessarily referring to the words or passages that they were designed to elucidate. Both methods of reading make the editors co-authors with Jerome. The second method, however, privileges the voice of the editor, interrupted only by the lemmatic incursions of Jerome. I have read the *scholia* in both ways.

The complexity of reading paratexts extends from method to function. Maclean pointed out several relationships between paratexts and their central text: "The verbal frame, or paratext, may enhance the text, it may define it, it may contrast with it, it may distance it, or it may be so disguised as to seem to form part of it."¹¹ Many of the functions that William Slights enumerated for *marginalia* easily apply to the various paratexts analyzed in this chapter, in particular "adding detail peripheral to the text" (amplification), "providing references, particularly to Scripture but also to classical and contemporary works" (annotation), "co-opting a text for purposes likely not anticipated by its author" (appropriation), "objecting to some point made by the author" (correction), "calling attention to important items" (emphasis), "clarifying meaning" (explication), "defending the author against detractors" (justification), and "identifying figures of speech and other artful uses of language and argumentation" (rhetorical gloss). Parody, "mocking the tone or substance of the text," is not at work in the way in which editors read Jerome, but it is a function of Vittori's reading of Erasmus' *scholia*.¹²

In shedding light on Jerome, editors simplified and at the same time complicated the experience of reading Jerome. *Hieronymus illustratus* radiated to readers the dispositions of his editors. Paratexts

¹¹ Maclean, "Pretexes and Paratexts," 274.

¹² Slights, *Managing Readers*, 25-26.

substantiated elements of a biographical portrait that had accumulated over the centuries and achieved refinement in the sixteenth century. Jerome was a saint, a master of eloquence, and a scholar. Through the paratextual elucidation of his erudition Erasmus and Vittori enlightened readers with their own scholarship and thus asserted their authoritative credentials for editing Jerome. Erasmus, whose admiration for Jerome was seemingly boundless in the *Vita Hieronymi*, subjected his hero to correction and criticism in the editorial commentary on his texts. The confessional contours of Vittori's biography of Jerome became much more pronounced in his *scholia*. His transformation of Jerome into a paragon of Catholic orthodoxy and a foe of Protestant heresy is consistent with the editorial enterprise of Peter Canisius and Cornelius Schulting. Erasmus too appropriated Jerome for his own theological and religious purposes. Editorial commentary combined philology with religious fervour.

Marginalia

Editorial interventions in collections of Jerome's letters began in scribal times. These interventions usually came in the form of *marginalia*. While some margins were bare, others provided at the very least variant readings, showing that medieval editors of Jerome were aware of the multiformity and thus the instability of the textual transmission. We have already seen in Chapter 2 that from the sidelines, as it were, medieval editors could raise doubts about the authenticity of a text attributed to Jerome.

The edition of Jerome's letters, completed in 1144, that belonged to St. George's Church in Goslar brings to light the various types of information an editor could supply to readers in the margins of Jerome's texts. The editor identified several classical references in Jerome's letters with the names of authors: *Virgilius*, *Terentius*, *Horatius*. In his letter to Nepotian (ep. 52), Jerome, self-consciously in Pauline fashion, remarks that in the Church different people have different stations; one is the eye, another the tongue, or hand, or foot, or ear, or stomach and so on (1 Corinthians 12: 14-24). He prefaces these remarks with a proverbial statement: *non omnia possumus omnes*—"we cannot all do everything." The editor knew that this came from

Virgil (*Eclogues* 8.63).¹³ One sidenote reveals the editor's rhetorical knowledge. To Heliodorus Jerome affirms:

But where there is no honour, there is contempt. Where there is contempt, there is usually insult. But where there is insult, there is also indignation. Where there is indignation, there is no peace. Where there is no peace, there the mind is often distracted from its purpose.

This rhetorical figure, the editor explains, is called a climax in Greek or (in Latin) a *gradatio*, which some also call a *catena* or chain. One sentence ends with a word that begins the next sentence.¹⁴ Elsewhere, the editor appreciates eloquent prose, singling out a beautiful saying in Jerome's second letter to Paulinus of Nola (ep. 58) and a "most elegant similitude" in Augustine's letter to Jerome on the soul's origin (ep. 131).¹⁵ He pauses to define various Greek words. *Ethnicus* means a pagan; a *palinodia* is a recantation; an *epichirema* signifies either a proof (*approbatio*), or a discussion (*executio*) or an argument (*argumentum*).¹⁶ In logic, an *epichirema* is certain type of syllogism, but in a letter to Augustine (ep. 102), Jerome uses the term (in the plural) in a broader sense. He wonders whether Augustine was the author of a letter he has received. The "style and exposition" (*stilus et ἐπιχειρήματα*) seem to be his.¹⁷ When Jerome mentions the Eleusinian mysteries in his letter to Magnus (ep. 70), the editor relates that Eleusis was an agricultural town near Athens. He supplements the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) with explanations of two obscure words: *basterna* and *veredarium*. The former was a chariot, in Gaul a vehicle for prestigious women. *Veredarii* were public messengers distinguished by the feather attached to their heads. Officials dared not to deny them anything when on business because they might be in the employ of a consul or emperor.¹⁸

In some incunabular editions of Jerome's letters, such as those printed by Riessinger, Sweynheym and Pannartz, Mentelin, and Schoeffer, readers could glean nothing from the margins. In Basel, Kesler printed the 1489 and 1492 *epistolaria* without lateral commentary. The edition that he printed in 1497, however, represented

¹³ Jerome: CSEL 54: 431; *marginalium*: HAB, 195 Helmst., 24r.

¹⁴ Jerome: CSEL 54: 54; *marginalium*: HAB, 195 Helmst., 18v.

¹⁵ HAB, 195 Helmst., 32v, 112v.

¹⁶ HAB, 195 Helmst., 19r, 44r.

¹⁷ CSEL 55: 235.

¹⁸ Jerome: CSEL 54: 704, 164, 186; HAB, 195 Helmst., 62v, 155v, 160r.

not only a typographical and organizational departure from the previous two; this third venture also provided *marginalia*. Often a series of scriptural references buttress the central text, upholding the sacred nature of Jerome's enterprise as a Christian writer. They of course also prove the editor's facility with the Bible. Occasionally the editor identified classical references in Jerome, pointing to such authors as Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Terence. Who can read all that Origen wrote, Jerome asks Pammachius and Oceanus (ep. 84). Those who criticize Origen should remember that in the case of slumbering Homer "it is permitted for sleep to steal upon a long work." A marginal note affirms that this was a quotation came from Horace's *Ars poetica* (359-60). When Jerome tells Furia of the myth of Argus who had one hundred eyes (ep. 54), another note reveals that the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (625, 721) was a source for this.¹⁹ In drawing on his, albeit partial, knowledge of ancient literature, Kesler's editor situated Jerome's oeuvre within a secular as well as a sacred milieu. Jerome's vow no more to read secular books did not inhibit the editor from annotating, here and there, the author's pagan sources.

The most concerted effort to supplement Jerome in the Lellian editorial tradition from the margins occurred in the volume printed by Saccon in Lyon in 1518. Its editor wanted to provide more than classical and biblical references. He delighted in drawing attention to the rhetorical value of the volume's contents. He frequently pointed out similitudes, here and there qualifying a *similitudo* as beautiful (*pulchra*), elegant (*elegans*), and excellent (*bona*). In writings rightly and wrongly attributed to Jerome, readers discovered excellent and elegant comparisons, wonderful and beautiful sayings.²⁰ Many, if not all, of the elucidations of Jerome's texts reproduced Erasmian *scholia*.

Erasmus understood the value of printed *marginalia*. In 1515, four years after its first edition, the *Praise of Folly* reappeared, this time with extensive commentary in the margins. Without the notes in the margins his text could not be rightly understood, Erasmus stated.

¹⁹ Jerome: CSEL 55: 131, CSEL 54: 475; *Liber epistolarum sancti Hieronimi* (Basel: Nicolaus Kesler, 1497), p3v, mm5r.

²⁰ Among the many examples, see *Epistole sancti Hieronymi* (Lyon: Jacques Saccon, 1518), Part 1, Vr, VIIr, VIIIr, XLVr, LIr, LXXXIr, LXXXVIIr, XCr, CXXX-IXv; Part 2, IIIIr, XXIIv; Part 3, Xr, XIr, XXXIv, XLVv, CVIv, CXIV, CXIIv.

Credit for these notes went to Gerardus Listrius, who as a medical student met Erasmus in Basel in 1514. In that year, Listrius furnished with some Greek verses the title page of Erasmus' translation of works by Plutarch, and in 1515, he served as corrector for the edition of the *Adages* that Froben printed. Some of Erasmus' readers, Martin Bucer for example, believed that Erasmus, not Listrius, had produced the commentary on the *Praise of Folly*. Erasmus finally admitted authorship of at least some of the *marginalia*.²¹ As destabilizing agents, these "further complicated the ironies of the text." "These notes," according to William Slights, "are not the work of a hack; they constitute an authorially sanctioned, integral part of the design of one of the most widely read and imitated texts of the sixteenth century." Furthermore, they suggest that Renaissance authors believed that texts were "incomplete and expandable, not finite, and certainly not definitive."²²

Erasmus' efforts to coach readers from the margins of his edition of Jerome were at best half-hearted. His *argumenta* and *scholia* were the main sites from which to complete Jerome's texts. In the 1516 edition, he supplied only one brief marginal comment, a protest against the "rogue" who imported the entry for Hilary of Poitiers from Jerome's catalogue of Christian writers into another, shorter catalogue written by, according to Erasmus' *censura*, "a most stupid brute" posing as Jerome.²³

More *marginalia* appear in the second edition, but the drive to address the reader from the margins eventually dwindles. After the second letter in the first volume, Jerome's essay on the ideal clergyman addressed to Nepotian (ep. 52), marginal supplements become sparse. Many of these are scattered alternate readings, at times suggested rather tentatively. Not only does Erasmus indicate that the word in question could otherwise (*aliter*) be replaced by the one he supplies in the margin; he also suggests that perhaps (*forte*) the marginal alternative is more appropriate or says "I think" (*arbitror*) the proposed variant makes more sense.²⁴ Twice Erasmus ostensibly

²¹ CEBR 2: 335; Slights, *Managing Readers*, 54-55.

²² Slights, *Managing Readers*, 57, 58, 60.

²³ *Opera* (1516), 2: 196r (*censura*), 196v (*marginalium*).

²⁴ *S. Hieronymi lucubrationes omnes*, 9 vols. (Basel: Johann Froben, 1524-1526), 1: 71, 140 (*aliter*), 1: 147, 199, 219, 2: 151 (*forte*); 1: 207, 267 (*arbitror*).

addresses the reader: see (*vide*) if the alternative reads better.²⁵ Or were these really editorial notes to himself? The *marginalia* disappear completely in the third and fourth volumes, except for the denunciation of the roguish interpolator in the volume of *spuria*, the fourth volume in the second edition.²⁶

The margination begins with the dedicatory letter to William Warham and gathers momentum in Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi*. For the most part Erasmus summarizes and reinforces the central text. From the margins of the letter to Warham he emphasizes "Jerome's pre-eminence," the unworthy treatment that his works had suffered, the hard work invested in correcting Jerome's texts, and the minimal renown accrued from this "supreme labour."²⁷ Erasmus thus replicates the irony of asserting credit for editing Jerome by lamenting insufficient recognition. The sidenotes to the *Vita* function as what Slights would call the organizational "exoskeleton" for the text in the form of "authorizing, summarizing, stabilizing annotation."²⁸ In the chronological presentation of Jerome's life, they accompany readers from Jerome's birthplace to his education in Rome, his first journey to Syria, his return to Rome, his second trip to Syria, his settling in Bethlehem, where he died. Along the way, signposts mark out, among other things, his teachers, his baptism and ordination, Rufinus his enemy, Augustine his "unreliable friend," and his supporters.²⁹ In his assessment of Jerome, after noting his acclaim, Erasmus asks whether Jerome was a virgin, why Jerome was beaten before God's tribunal and why some deny that he was a theologian. He remembers to underline "Jerome's eloquence." Among Jerome's *taxatores*, his critics, he mentions marginally only Lorenzo Valla.³⁰

A note of criticism appears alongside the *Adversus Jovinianum*. Early on, Jerome engages in a lengthy exegesis of 1 Corinthians 7, the longest treatment of marriage in the New Testament. When Paul recommends that each should be content with his station whether circumcised or uncircumcised, slave or free, Jerome seeks to relate

²⁵ Ibid., 1: 156, 2: 218.

²⁶ Ibid., 4: 425.

²⁷ Ibid., 1: AA2v-AA3v.

²⁸ Slights, *Managing Readers*, 157.

²⁹ *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 1: AA6r-BB4r.

³⁰ Ibid., 1: BB4r, BB5r, BB6r, BB7r.

this to the theme of marriage. To be circumcised means to be free of a wife. Erasmus dismisses this as a “forced interpretation.”³¹

In two places, Erasmus issues the advisory to “read carefully” and in another to “pay attention.” In the famous letter to Eustochium (ep. 22), Jerome considers what it meant that “the Son of God became a son of man for our salvation.” He spent nine months in the womb. He who holds the world in his hand was held by the confines of a crib. He was content with his parents’ poverty. When he was scourged, he said nothing; when he was crucified, he prayed for his executioners.³² Did Erasmus single out this passage to foster devotion to Christ? His *scholia* provide no clue to answer the question. In the *Adversus Jovinianum*, Jerome maintains: “It is one thing not to sin and another to do well.” Then he quotes Paul, who says that “if a virgin marries, she has not sinned” (1 Corinthians 7: 28). Does the marginal exhortation *attende* draw attention to Paul’s belief that marrying is not a sin or Jerome’s insinuation that while marrying is not a sin it is not a good deed either?³³ Later in the treatise, Jerome weighs the importance of the apostle Peter, a married man, and the apostle John, a virgin and also an evangelist. He concludes that Jesus loved John more on account of his virginity. The injunction *caute lege* urges the reader to ponder Jerome’s reply to Jovinian:

But you say that the Church is founded upon Peter, even if in another place this very foundation was laid upon all the apostles, and all receive the keys to the kingdom of heaven and the strength of the Church is established upon them equally. Nevertheless for that reason one was elected among the twelve so that with an appointed leader the opportunity for schism would be removed.³⁴

Did Erasmus find this passage worthy of notice because it seems to support a more collegial model of Church government and to equate Peter’s primacy with a matter of pragmatism, not principle?

With Jerome’s *De viris illustribus* Erasmus reasserts his editorial mettle in separating the spurious from the genuine. He was the first to publish a Greek version of the text, which he attributed to a certain Sophronius. The Latin and Greek texts appeared side by side in two columns. In a marginal note keyed to the second entry—on

³¹ Jerome: PL 23: 225B-C; Erasmus: *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 2: 24.

³² Jerome: CSEL 54: 206; Erasmus: *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 1: 150.

³³ Jerome: PL 23: 229B-C; Erasmus: *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 2: 26.

³⁴ Jerome: PL 23: 247A; Erasmus: *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 2: 35.

Andrew, Peter's brother—Erasmus explains that Jerome recorded only writers, but Sophronius included all the apostles. The inference, of course, is that Jerome did not have Andrew on his list. Further on, Erasmus maintains that the nine entries between James, the son of Zebidee and Jude (including James but not Jude) were not the work of Jerome but “were added by the Greeks.” Of Acacius, Bishop of Caesarea, Jerome writes that his prestige in the reign of Constantius II was such that the emperor replaced Liberius with Felix as Bishop of Rome. Erasmus' Latin text referred to “Felix the Arian,” but in a note next to Greek version the editor pointed out that “the Greek did not add ‘Arian.’”³⁵ In sidenotes, Vittori, who published only a Latin text, followed Erasmus' lead in all three cases, reproducing *verbatim* the claim: *Haec usque ad Iudam non sunt Hieronymi, sed a Graecis adiecta*.³⁶

In the third edition, Claude Chevallon reprinted Erasmus' *marginalia*, but the margins introduce another editor, if we assume that this was not Chevallon. The Parisian printing of Jerome (1533-1534) was not exclusively an Erasmian project. The edition's title page hints at this. At the top of the page, it announces the contents of the edition: the complete surviving works of Jerome, including *spuria* and some works by other authors, in nine volumes. But “now” the edition boasts the added benefit that recently these works have been reliably and diligently collated and restored thanks to old manuscripts from the library of St. Victor in Paris.

The many Victorine readings in the margins compete with the central texts as established by Erasmus. Only one sidenote refers to Erasmus by name. It appears with Jerome's preface, addressed to Bishop Chromatius of Aquileia, to the Old Testament Chronicles. Here the presumably Parisian editor displaced Erasmus' reading. Jerome acknowledges the editorial problem with the Septuagint is that there are as many different manuscripts as there are places where they may be found. From Constantinople to Antioch the manuscripts of Julian the martyr have won approval. To this state-

³⁵ Jerome: Ernest Cushing Richardson, ed., *Hieronymus, liber de viris inlustribus; Genadius, liber de viris inlustribus* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1896), 47; Erasmus: *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 1: 266, 268, 299. Felix, Liberius' rival, is known as Antipope Felix II.

³⁶ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 1: 169, 170 (quotation), 184.

ment the anonymous editor notes: “Erasmus here reads ‘Lucian the martyr,’ even though most manuscripts disagree. Indeed Jerome in the *Catalogue of Famous Writers* remembers Lucian the priest and martyr.” On this point, modern scholarship has sustained Erasmus’ reading.³⁷

Marginal annotations abound in the three volumes of genuine letters. The Parisian editor did not devote much energy to the volume of *spuria*. Marginal nudity, occurring for example on three pages of the letter to Sunnia and Fretela (ep. 106),³⁸ comes almost as a surprise in the first three volumes of the edition. Scriptural references often teem on the shoulders of pages, as is the case with the *Dialogue against the Pelagians*.³⁹ References to sources other than the Bible are extremely rare. In the letter to Demetrias (ep. 130), the Parisian editor caught a reference to Sallust’s definition of friendship in the *Catalinian Conspiracy* (20.4) that Erasmus overlooked: “to desire the same things, to dislike the same things—that in a nutshell is a firm friendship.”⁴⁰ As Jerome in his first letter begins to unfold the story of the wrongly accused woman, we see the young man and the woman in prison. The former preferred death to further torture and accused the woman of adultery. He deserved to be executed, Jerome opined, because he left the woman no basis for reclaiming her innocence. She in turn, praying to Jesus, did not wish to lie to save her life because that would be a sin. In a *scholion* already printed in 1516, Erasmus remarked that adultery was still a capital offence in Jerome’s day. Pointing out that “the punishment for adulterers was the sword,” a sidenote in the Parisian edition also refers the reader to Roman law, to the *Lex Julia* on adultery (*Digest* 48.5) and sacrilege (*Digest* 48.13).⁴¹ Occasionally, marginal annotations briefly emphasize or

³⁷ *Divi Eusebii Hieronymii Stridonensis, opera omnia quae extant*, 9 vols. (Paris: Claude Chevallon, 1533-1534), 3: 6v; PL 28: 1325A; *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 546.

³⁸ *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 3: 30r, 31r, 31v

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 2: 100r-110r, esp. 101r-106r

⁴⁰ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 192; Parisian editor: *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 1: 24v, where the passage in Jerome reads: *Eadem velle, & eadem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est*. The reading in modern critical editions is *idem*, not *eadem*. Thus, L. D. Reynolds, ed., *C. Sallusti Crispi Catalina, Iugurtha, Historiarum fragmenta selecta, Appendix sallustiana* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 17: *idem uelle atque idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est*.

⁴¹ Jerome: CSEL 54: 2; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 106r; Parisian editor: *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 1: 83v.

summarize passages from the central text. They repeat, for example, the three types of monks in Egypt that Jerome lists in the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22)—the cenobites, the anchorites, and, the worst sort, the Remoboth—and several of the pagan women who nobly maintained their virginity according to Jerome’s “catalogue of women” in the *Adversus Jovinianum*.⁴² Much more frequently, Chevalon’s editor draws attention to Erasmus’ *scholia* by replicating the key word of the lemma or the first word or main concept of a *scholion*.

In his first letter to Pope Damasus (ep. 15), Jerome writes that he is speaking “with the successor of the fisherman (*cum successore piscatoris*) and disciple of the cross.” He affirms that his first allegiance, after following Christ, is to associate with “Your Beatitude, that is the throne of Peter. I know that the Church was built upon that rock (*super illam petram*). Whoever eats outside this house (*extra hanc domum*) is not holy.”⁴³ A marginal advertisement for the “Roman pontiff” accompanies Erasmus’ comment on *cum successore piscatoris* that Jerome “shows that the Roman pontiff must be supremely beyond reproach in order to succeed the fisherman and to exercise the office of the Crucified One, that is, with the greatest humility.” Keying a *scholion* to *extra hanc domum*, Erasmus observes:

Here Jerome seems completely wedded to the idea that all churches ought to be subordinate to the Roman see, or certainly not to be separated from it, for it uniquely prides itself on that apostle who held the first rank among the apostles, and thus it is orthodox so that it might be first in dignity among the orthodox churches. He, moreover, alludes to the house in which Christ ate the paschal lamb with the twelve apostles.

A marginal note epitomizes this as “the dignity of the Roman Church.” The Parisian editor did not mark out for special recognition the *scholion* that explained what it meant for the Church to be built *super illam petram*:

Not upon Rome, in my opinion. For it is possible that Rome too could degenerate, but upon that faith, which Peter professed and which until

⁴² Jerome: CSEL 54: 196-97, PL 23: 270B-276B; Parisian editor: *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 1: 52v; 2: 18r-19r.

⁴³ Jerome: CSEL 54: 63-64; *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 2: 47v.

now the Roman Church has preserved and because of which it has been afflicted by heresies more than any other church.⁴⁴

Marginalia can be perplexingly brief. Can we scent a whiff of Catholic confessionalism in the emphasis on the “Roman pontiff” and “the dignity of the Roman Church” and the references to heretics in the margins of Jerome’s texts? The first eight volumes of the Parisian edition were printed in 1533. The year of publication is 1534 for the ninth volume, the index at the end of the edition, and the title page for the entire edition. The *marginalia* in the volumes of Jerome’s letters appeared three years after the failed attempt to reconcile Catholics and Protestants in the Holy Roman Empire at the Diet of Augsburg but still on the eve of the Affair of the Placards when Protestant denunciations of the Mass were prominently posted in Paris and elsewhere in northern France early on 18 October 1534.⁴⁵ The Affair ignited confessional antagonism like no other previous event in France. No new editorial intervention in the third edition patently manoeuvred it into the Reformation conflict, however.

The Parisian experiment did not find favour in Basel, where Erasmus’ fourth and final edition of Jerome appeared posthumously in 1536-1537. This edition deleted the marginal incursions of Chevalon’s editor. Gone were the annotations to the *scholia*, the signposts to passages in Jerome, the scriptural references, and the variant readings that suggested alternatives to the ways in which Erasmus had resurrected Jerome’s texts. In Jerome’s preface to *Chronicles*, Lucian, displacing Julian, returned to his rightful place.⁴⁶ Erasmus added no reference to Sallust in his *scholia* on the letter to Demetrias (ep. 130) or to the *Lex Julia* in the letter to Innocent (ep. 1).

By the time the Erasmian edition of Jerome was last reprinted in Basel in 1565, work had begun to confessionalize the reading of Jerome. In Chapter 1, we saw how Martin Luther sarcastically attacked the papacy from the margins of his 1538 edition of Jerome’s letter to Evangelus (ep. 146), even claiming Jerome as a “Lutheran.” In the second, revised edition of his anthology of Jerome, printed in 1565, Peter Canisius encouraged a Catholic reading of Jerome with

⁴⁴ *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 2: 48r.

⁴⁵ Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 17.

⁴⁶ *Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes*, 9 vols. (Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopius, 1536-1537), 3: 19.

sidenotes. The margins in Mariano Vittori's editions of Jerome's letters printed in 1564-1565 and 1566 and in the first three of the nine volumes of his first *opera omnia* edition, which appeared between 1571 and 1576, were free of confessional commentary. Vittori filled the margins with scriptural references, emphasizing Jerome's sacred purpose. References to pagan literature awaited the reader in the *scholia* at a distance from Jerome's texts. The *opera omnia* that Nivelles printed in Paris in 1578-1579 added marginal annotations of confessional import, however. Not surprisingly, Cornelius Schulting added a confessionalized dimension to his coaching of readers in the *Confessio Hieronymiana* (1585).

The original edition of Canisius' anthology (1562) provided only variant readings in the margins. The reprise of 1565 added scriptural references and commentary. Its expanded preface intensified the anthology's self-conscious Catholic identity. From a Catholic perspective the religious situation in Germany looked grim. Who wanted "to live chastely with Jerome" and with Paul "to crucify the flesh with its vices and desires" (cf. Galatians 5: 24)? Private penance was disappearing. Apparently, the very mention of penance had been deleted from German Bibles. "Ancient piety" had to endure mockery; the "pure sacraments" suffered repudiation. "Everywhere divine worship is being abolished, altars and churches profaned," Canisius complained. Respect for the Church Fathers and reverence for the saints and their relics were vanishing.⁴⁷ In the original preface, Canisius warned against the contemporary followers of Vigilantius who attacked the cult of the saints. Christians should demonstrate their reverence for the saints "with external rituals whether the Vigilantians like it or not." For the second edition Canisius revised this passage to read that Christians should "witness to their devotion with external rituals and in accordance with Catholic custom."⁴⁸

At the end of the anthology, Canisius combines "two writings of Blessed Jerome against Vigilantius, the heretic from Gaul" on the topic of the cult of the saints. These are the letter to Riparius (ep. 109) and the *Adversus Vigilantium*. In the margins of these texts, the Jesuit persistently defends devotion to the saints against the sixteenth-century Vigilantians, his code word for Protestants. They accuse

⁴⁷ PCE 5: 27-28.

⁴⁸ PCE 3: 279; 5: 29.

Catholics of being “ash-servants and idolaters,” of turning the saints into gods and worshipping them.⁴⁹ But “the Church does not worship the saints, as the heretics pretend.” Canisius reiterates: “The Church honours the martyrs without idolatry.”⁵⁰ He also insists that it is the duty of bishops “to crush the errors of the Vigilantians” and that “the saints want to and can pray for us, against the Vigilantians.”⁵¹ Elsewhere in the 1565 edition, Canisius informs readers that “monks and virgins adorn the Church” and affirms the value of the Lenten fast and of fasting in general.⁵²

Marginalia from Nivelles’s printing of the Jerome’s *opera omnia* found their way into Canisius’ anthology that Nivelles printed in 1582, displacing many of the original annotations. The revised marginal commentary became standard for subsequent printings of the anthology. One obvious Catholic hallmark that the *opera omnia* edition bequeathed to the anthology was a reference to the second session of the Council of Trent, which took place on 7 January 1546. The note anachronistically pairs Jerome’s praise of Nepotian’s restraint at the table of his uncle, Bishop Heliodorus of Altinum (ep. 62), with the conciliar injunction that “sobriety and a moderation of foods” be observed at a bishop’s table.⁵³ Nivelles’s editor for the *opera omnia* fashioned one more link between Jerome’s day and the sixteenth century. Jerome holds up Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse as role model for Rusticus the monk. While hungry, the holy bishop fed others

and bestowed all of his possessions upon Christ’s beloved. No one was richer than he, who carries about the body of Christ in a wicker basket and his blood in a glass, who thrust greed out of the temple, who without a cord or a rebuke overturned the chairs of those who sold doves, that is the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as the tables of mam-

⁴⁹ *Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Dillingen: Sebaldus Mayer, 1565), 281r, 286r.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 281v, 288r.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 282r, 287r.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 48r, 92r, 139r, 149v, 150v, 173v.

⁵³ Jerome: CSEL 54: 561; *marginalia: Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae reperiri potuerunt*, 9 vols. (Paris: Sébastien Nivelles, 1578-1579), 1: col. 28; *D. Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae selectae* (Paris: Sébastien Nivelles, 1582), 267v; Trent: Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 1: 661.

mon, and scattered the coins of the moneychangers so that the house of God might be called a house of prayer and not a den of thieves.

The sidenote explains: “St. Jerome commends the almsgiving of Saint Exuperius, Bishop of Toulouse. This passage was distorted by Calvin.”⁵⁴ In the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559), Calvin recalls the passage while discussing the early Church’s expenditures on the poor:

Jerome, when attacking the excessive splendour of church buildings, makes honourable mention of Exuperius of Toulouse, a bishop of his day, who carried about the body of the Lord in a wicker basket and his blood in a glass. In fact, he did not allow a poor person to go hungry.

Nivelle’s editor must have taken offence at the context that Calvin supplied. Jerome’s appeal to the example of Exuperius followed his wish that those who renounced the world should do so willingly, not under compulsion, and that they should embrace poverty and not see it as painful imposition. It seems that Calvin had the wrong source in mind. A marginal note in the *Institutes* reads: *Ad Nepotianum*.⁵⁵ Jerome does criticize lavishly constructed churches in the letter to Nepotian (ep. 52),⁵⁶ but not in the letter to Rusticus (ep. 125).

Many sidenotes in the Parisian *opera omnia* emphasize distinctive features of Catholicism. Jerome’s writings justify the cult of the saints. Nivelle’s editor observes that “the saints pray after death,” that “St. Jerome invokes Paula” after her death, and that he “acknowledges the merits of the saints.”⁵⁷ Readers receive a reminder about “prayer for the dead,” learn that “the Church’s traditions must be kept,” discover Jerome’s reason for approving priestly celibacy, notice that “fasting merits favour with God,” and encounter a reference to the “sacrament of confirmation.”⁵⁸ Heretics often arouse censure, even when Jerome does not mention them. When in the letter to Julian of Dalmatia (ep. 118) he urges him not to live as a monk among

⁵⁴ Jerome: CSEL 56: 141; marginal comment: *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1578-1579), 1: col. 49.

⁵⁵ John Calvin, *Institutio christianae religionis, in libros quatuor nunc primum digesta* (Geneva: Robert Estienne, 1559), 393.

⁵⁶ CSEL 54: 431-33.

⁵⁷ *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1578-1579), 1: cols. 2, 240, 319.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1: cols. 239, 247; 2: cols. 45, 102, 187.

worldly people, this strangely elicits the comment: “Against the heretics who strive to deter monks from their holy purpose.” One conclusion to be drawn from the *Adversus Helvidium* is that “heretics are vanquished by the writings of the Fathers” when Jerome proposes to mobilize against Helvidius “an entire contingent of ancient writers,” such as Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Irenaeus, and Justin Martyr.⁵⁹ The obverse of castigating heretics is to emphasize loyalty to Rome. Nivelles’s editor twice extrapolates “the authority of the Roman Church” from Jerome’s texts.⁶⁰ He repeats that “Christ founded the Church on Peter” and asserts that “the Roman pontiff is the successor of St. Peter.”⁶¹ Jerome’s letter to Damasus (ep. 15) reveals that he “consulted the chair of Peter” and that “whoever eats the lamb outside the Roman Church is not holy.”⁶²

The editorial voices in the margins were not exclusively confessionalized. Editors could simply summarize or draw attention to key points in Jerome that had no obvious controversial import. Nivelles’s editor urged readers to read carefully what Jerome has to say about second marriages. He also took time to enjoy Jerome’s prose by identifying elegant similitudes.⁶³ For all his polemical credentials, Schulting could provide neutral abstracts of Jerome’s texts as well as pause to appreciate “a most elegant similitude” and supply at least one classical reference—to Virgil’s *Aeneid*.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the editorial enterprise to appropriate Jerome to champion sixteenth-century Catholicism is unmistakable.

Up and down the pages of the *Confessio Hieronymiana*, Schulting attacks heretics. Jerome amply does the same in his writings, and Schulting gladly seconds Jerome by repeating that “no heretics are Christians,” “heretics are devils,” and “heretics are pagans.”⁶⁵ Schulting, however, also imparts lessons to readers that are not always immediately obvious in the passages that he reproduces. A sidenote transforms Jerome’s remark to Eustochium that “Antichrist pretends

⁵⁹ Jerome: CSEL 55: 443; PL 23: 201B; marginal comments: *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1578-1579), 1: col. 270; 2: col. 17.

⁶⁰ *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1578-1579), 1: col. 147; 2: col. 179.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2: cols. 170, 196

⁶² *Ibid.*, 2: col. 175.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1: cols. 87, 104, 210, 280, 339.

⁶⁴ *Confessio Hieronymiana*, ed. Cornelius Schulting (Cologne: Birkmann, 1585), 7, 9.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 101.

to be Christ" (ep. 22) into "the anti-Christian heretics pretend to be Christ."⁶⁶ While he often repeats Jerome's specific targets, such as Arius and Marcion, Schulting infers that what Jerome says of particular individuals applies to the entire species. Readers learn that "heretics cannot be joined in faith with Catholics" and that "heretics conceal poison beneath honey." They are the devil's children, the offspring of adultery. They must be excommunicated.⁶⁷ Schulting asserts: "Heretics boast of faith alone." Within a series of texts designed to show that sinners are not justified by faith alone, he includes a passage from the *Commentary on Hosea* in which Jerome attacks heretics for not only refraining from penance but also rejoicing in their wicked deeds. A marginal note points out that Jerome "openly chastises Luther and marks him out, as it were, with his finger." Schulting sets a passage from the *Adversus Jovinianum* "against Osiander who thought that we are justified by God's essential righteousness." In the section on the sacraments, comments from the *Dialogue against the Luciferians* "assail the doctrine of Calvin, who confuses the baptism of John and of Christ."⁶⁸

Schulting's copious sidenotes reinforce the purpose of his digest of Hieronymian texts. Jerome is a model of orthodoxy, a scourge of heretics of all times, including Schulting's, but also a witness to the truth of Catholic doctrine and worship. In a collection of texts corresponding to an article designed to prove that "the Church is one, holy, Catholic, and Roman," the editor includes a passage from the preface, addressed to Paula and Eustochium, to the second book of Jerome's *Commentary on Galatians*:

The faith of the Roman people is the object of praise. Where else do people flock to the churches and the tombs of the martyrs with such enthusiasm and so often? Where do the echoes of the 'Amen' so resemble heavenly thunder and the empty temples of idols quake? Not that the Romans possess a faith other than that of all the churches of Christ, but that their devotion is greater, as is their straightforward approach to belief.

Even though Jerome speaks of Romans, not the Roman Church, and makes no explicit reference to the Catholic Church, Schulting's

⁶⁶ Jerome: CSEL 54: 205; *Confessio Hieronymiana*, 94.

⁶⁷ *Confessio Hieronymiana*, 21, 45, 70, 821.

⁶⁸ Jerome, *Commentary on Hosea*: CCSL 76: 42; *Confessio Hieronymiana*, 476, 492, 669.

lateral commentary proclaims “the praise of the faith and devotion of the Roman Church” and that “the Roman or the Catholic Church means the same thing.” Later in the *Confessio*, Schulting adjusts his intervention to correspond to a new article, namely that “the true faith is none other than the Catholic faith.” The same passage from Jerome evinces “praise for the Roman faith” and reveals that “the Roman faith and the Catholic faith are one and the same.”⁶⁹

Argumenta

The *argumenta* that summarized Jerome’s letters allowed editors to guide readers regularly and frequently. Teodoro de’ Lelli was likely the first editor to introduce *argumenta* as a regular form of commentary in collections of Jerome’s letters. I have examined only a small number of manuscript *epistolaria*, and so I cannot say categorically that editions that preceded the dawn of print did not provide *argumenta*. With the exception, of course, of those manuscripts that copied printed books, summaries of Jerome’s letters were not present in any of the manuscripts that I consulted.

Nevertheless, an eleventh-century manuscript (BAV, Vat. lat. 371) consisting of the *Adversus Jovinianum*, the two letters to Pammachius related to this treatise (epp. 48, 49), Jerome’s translation of the letter of Epiphanius of Salamis to John of Jerusalem (ep. 51), and the *Adversus Helvidium* begins with a prologue to the first work. This prologue is virtually identical with the *argumentum* that Lelli printed at the head of the long treatise. The differences are only minor. Apart from the inclusion of the adverb *iam* in the prologue and its absence in the same sentence in the *argumentum*, a difference in the tense of one verb, and the addition of the qualification of *ante deum* (“before God”) at the end of a sentence in the *argumentum*, the prologue aligns Jovinian with the Stoic philosophers, whereas Lelli refers to the Stoic priests. Lelli cites his source: Augustine’s *De haeresibus*. Indeed, his summary and the medieval prologue abridge Augustine’s chapter (82) on the followers of Jovinian, while adding some material of their own.⁷⁰ Lelli’s near replication of the medieval paratext suggests that he did not condense Augustine independently. He must have copied

⁶⁹ Jerome: CCSL 77A: 80; *Confessio Hieronymiana*, 70, 71, 441, 443.

⁷⁰ For Augustine’s discussion of the disciples of Jovinian, see CCSL 46: 337.

it from some manuscript. It remains an open question if other Lellian *argumenta* began life elsewhere and earlier.

In his preface, Lelli admits that some of his *argumenta* are derivative: "In addition, we have prefaced these very letters [of Jerome], or at least many of them, with summaries (*argumenta*) very often excerpted from renowned men; and thanks to these, when a long text (*pagina*) is compressed into a brief abridgement, the reader's mind is more easily prepared for the task of understanding." From the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville (8.5.55) the Italian editor turns the brief identification of the Luciferians into the introduction to Jerome's polemic against this sect. He consulted Augustine not only for material on Jovinian but also employed Augustine's rejection of the Origenists from the *De haeresibus* (42) for the summary of Jerome's letter to Avitus (ep. 124) on Origen's errors in *On First Principles*. A quotation from Augustine's *Retractations* (2.45) appears *after* his letter to Jerome asking for an interpretation of James 2: 10 (ep. 132). The entry in the *Retractations* records not only this text but also the "book," sent to Jerome, on the origin of the soul (ep. 131), which Lelli placed much earlier in his edition, in the fourth *tractatus* of Part 1 as distinct from the second *tractatus* of Part 2, which included ep. 132.⁷¹ Jerome himself became a source for Lelli's *argumenta*. The passage in the letter to Desiderius (ep. 47), in which he says he has completed the *De viris illustribus*, serves as the introduction to the catalogue of writers.

Gennadius was a favoured source. Passages from his *De viris illustribus* introduced readers to Jerome's opponents Helvidius, Vigilantius, Pelagius (for the *Dialogue against the Pelagians*), and Rufinus, and his friend Paulinus of Nola. Lelli revised Gennadius by interpolating a reference to Vigilantius' rejection of venerating the relics of the saints and holding vigils. This was appropriate to prepare readers for the *Adversus Vigilantium*.

Two *argumenta* lead the reader into the first book of Rufinus' *Apology against Jerome*. They have the remarkable effect of presenting the author in a positive light. Lelli wrote the first *argumentum*. He thinks Rufinus attacked Jerome because he was provoked by a serious public accusation. In the first book of the *Apology*, Rufinus affirms his

⁷¹ For Augustine's review of his two missives to Jerome in the *Retractations*, see CCSL 57: 126-27.

belief in the resurrection of the flesh, states that Jerome has erred in his commentaries, and consolidates the “most proper reasons for his translation” (of Origen’s *First Principles*) by claiming that he made his translation not from desire for glory “but from the fear of God and the benefit of the Church” (*sed dei timore ecclesie profutura*). Rufinus, however, does not issue this justification in Book 1 of his *Apology*. The second *argumentum* reproduces Gennadius’ appreciative synopsis of Rufinus, who claimed that Rufinus responded to the works of a nameless assailant (Jerome) “in the sight of God and for the benefit of the Church” (*dei intuitu & ecclesiae utilitate*). Lelli must have assimilated this statement into his summary. In Book 2, Rufinus says that the impetus for translation came not out of desire for glory but from the fear of God.⁷²

A list of Rufinus’ charges against Jerome prefaces Book 2 of the *Apology*. He lashed out at “every rank of the Church” in a work on virginity (ep. 22), rails at St. Ambrose, accuses all writers of being ignorant fools, commits “detestable perjury” by reading secular books in violation of his oath, boasts of having the “impious Porphyry” as his teacher, blasphemes against God by praising Origen, of whom he disapproves, to the skies, and by subverting the Old Testament, sanctioned by the apostles, with a new translation. Yet at the outset Lelli equates these charges with the abuse (*maledicta*) that “Rufinus heaped upon Blessed Jerome in this second book under the guise of an apology.” In a second *argumentum* to the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22), Lelli quotes from Rufinus’ criticism of this text, namely that Jerome with the “vilest reproaches defamed the entire Church”—every rank, station, and occupation among Christians. After noting that Jerome in reply “elegantly” cleared himself of the accusation, the editor quotes at greater length from what he takes to be a favourable assessment of Jerome’s attack on avarice, vanity, conceit, and superstition in the first of Sulpicius Severus’ *Dialogues*.⁷³ Only in one other place, in the *argumentum* to the letter “under the name of Paula

⁷² Gennadius: Richardson, *Hieronymus, liber de viris inlustribus*; Gennadius, *liber de viris inlustribus*, 68; Rufinus: CCSL 20: 118.

⁷³ For Rufinus’ criticism, see CCSL 20: 86-87; for Sulpicius Severus’ remarks, see CSEL 1: 160. A fresh look at the evidence holds that the praise for Jerome in Sulpicius’ *Dialogues* reveals a deliberate misrepresentation and points to a deeper criticism of Jerome to be appreciated by those familiar with his controversy with, and supportive of, Rufinus. See Richard J. Goodrich, “*Vir Maxime Catholicus*: Sulpicius Severus’ Use and Abuse of Jerome in the *Dialogi*,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 58 (2007): 201-209.

and Eustochium" to Marcella (ep. 46), does Lelli refer to Jerome's elegant style.

Despite giving voice to Rufinus' accusations, Lelli, as is already evident, clearly took Jerome's side. His title for the first book of Rufinus' *Apology* states that it is directed "against the illustrious doctor Blessed Jerome." Whereas Jerome, "ravaged by the accursed two books of Rufinus," defended himself in a letter to Pammachius and Marcella—the first book of the *Apology against Rufinus*—and in a "third letter"—the third book of the *Apology*—refuted every slanderous charge, Lelli decided to place a letter to Rufinus (ep. 81) ahead of the *Apology*. In this letter, written, as the editor says in his *argumentum*, with great kindness (*perhumaniter*), Jerome complains about the suspicion levelled at him in Rufinus' preface to his translation of the *First Principles*. The extended title of Book 3 of the *Apology* remarks that in this missive Jerome rebuts Rufinus' slanders (*maledicta*) one by one and "shows him to be a partisan of the Origenist heresy and an accursed heckler."

For the most part Lelli is correct in pointing out the brevity of his summaries. Some *argumenta* are labelled as such and thus appear as discrete paratexts. In many cases, if a letter can be said to have an *argumentum*, it finds its summary in an extended title. Title and summary merge, for instance, in the only paratext for the letter to Julian (ep. 118):

The consolatory letter of Blessed Jerome to Julian concerning his deceased daughters and wife saying that in comparison to Blessed Jerome he had endured a sort of shadow and semblance (*ludus*) of strife, and with sayings from the Gospels and the example of the apostles he urges him on to the contempt of the world and the soldiery (*militia*) of Christ.

Lelli's quotations from other sources provide historical background but are not strictly speaking summaries because, unlike his own compositions, they do not analyze the texts that they introduce. The *argumenta* to three letters on virginity—those to Eustochium (ep. 22) and Demetrias (ep. 130) as well as the spurious one to the latter—are lengthy, not short, abridgements, obviously indicating the importance that Lelli attached to these texts and their subjects. Only an oblique reference to Jerome's dream emerges in the summary of ep. 22. Jerome warns Eustochium away from pagan books, "recalling his story when he was corrected for reading pagans."

Lelli the jurist momentarily departs from reviewing the contents of Jerome's letters to indicating their legal value with references to Gratian's *Decretum*. He alerts readers that Augustine and Ambrose, cited in the *Decretum* (D. 26 c. 1, c. 4), oppose Jerome's view in the letter to Oceanus (ep. 69) that marriage before baptism does not count against a man's eligibility for episcopal office—for a bishop can be a husband of only one wife—if he has married a second time after baptism. On the other hand, the *Decretum* appeals to Jerome's authority by quoting from his letter to Evangelus (ep. 146) to show a priest's superiority to a deacon (D. 93 c. 24).

A few of Lelli's *argumenta* clearly situate Jerome in the orthodox camp. Jerome's letter to Marcella (ep. 41) "against the madness of Montanus the heretic" shows, according to Lelli, how his teaching is at odds with the Catholic Church. Lelli sharpens the conflict. Jerome describes only Montanus' female companions Prisca and Maximilla as "insane" and distinguishes between Montanist beliefs and what "we" believe.⁷⁴ He does not explicitly unveil the "Catholic" position, but he would be the first to agree with Lelli's wording. The editor sums up a letter to Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria (ep. 88) as "the reply of Blessed Jerome in which he values the duty of rebuking heretics and takes pride in having his opinion agree with the faith of the Roman pontiff." This turns out to be a misrepresentation, however. When Jerome requests any synodal documents that Theophilus has so that he (Jerome) might be "strengthened by the authority of so great a pontiff," he nowhere mentions the Bishop of Rome but clearly praises the Bishop of Alexandria.⁷⁵ In his letter to Magnus the orator (ep. 70), Jerome answers why he employs examples from secular literature, and thus the example of Paul the apostle and of almost all Catholic writers, philosophers, and poets serves the strengthening of "our doctrines." Jerome never explicitly qualifies any of the Christian writers that he acknowledges as Catholic. The *argumentum* invokes Jerome's authority for a synthesis of classical and Christian culture, suggesting in humanist fashion that classical culture is compatible with Catholic orthodoxy.

Before editing Jerome, Erasmus had some limited experience writing *argumenta*. He produced detailed summaries of Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia at Aulis* for translations of these works that he published

⁷⁴ CSEL 54: 314.

⁷⁵ CSEL 55: 142.

in 1506. Twenty years later, ten years after the first edition of Jerome, Erasmus published an edition of *Against Heresies* by Irenaeus of Lyon and supplied *argumenta* for the last four of the work's five books.⁷⁶ The edition of Jerome represents his most sustained effort at introducing readers to individual texts, and here he belongs to the editorial tradition established by Lelli.

While Erasmus was capable of analyzing Jerome's texts on his own and never reproduced statements of others for his *argumenta*, here and there we encounter some parallels with the *argumenta* in Lelli's edition. Take, for example, the introductions to Jerome's translation of a letter of Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis to Bishop John of Jerusalem (ep. 51). Lelli subjoins his *argumentum* to the title, while Erasmus produces a discrete paratext:

Lelli

Epistola beati epiphaniï ad iohannem Hierosolimitanum per beatum hieronimum e greco translata in qua se excusat quod in monasterio beati Hieronimi inconsulto eo presbiterum ordinari ostendens se iure fecisse [.]. Deinde illum commonet ne origenis erroribus implicetur quos ex ordine narrat & detegit.

The letter of Blessed Epiphanius to John of Jerusalem, translated out of Greek into Latin by Blessed Jerome, in which he excuses himself for ordaining a priest in the monastery of St. Jerome without consulting him, showing that he had acted legally. Then he warns him not to become involved with the errors of Origen, which he in turn recounts and reveals.

Erasmus

Epiphanius episcopus Salaminae Cypri excusat se Iohanni episcopo Hierosolymitano, quod presbyterum ordinasset in illius diocesi, ipso inconsulto. Deinde commonet ut ab Origenis erroribus absteineat. Hanc epistolam Hieronymus in odium Iohannis & Ruffini latinam fecit.

Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis on Cyprus, excuses himself to John, Bishop of Jerusalem, for having ordained a priest in his diocese without consulting him. Then he warns [him] to keep away from the errors of Origen. Jerome translated this letter into Latin out of hatred for John and Rufinus.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ *Euripidis Tragici poetae nobilissimi Hecuba et Iphigenia: latinae factae Erasmo Roterodamo interprete* (Paris: Josse Bade, 1506), A3v-A4r; F1r-F1v = ASD I-1: 221-22, 269-71; *Opus eruditissimum Divi Irenaei episcopi Lugdunensis in quinque libros digestum, in quibus mire relegit & confutat ueterum haereseon impias ac portentosas opiniones* (Basel: Froben, 1526), 61, 138, 206, 293. Erasmus expanded the argumentum to the fifth book of *Against Heresies* in a second revised edition: *Opus eruditissimum Divi Irenaei* (Basel: Froben, 1534), 291-92.

⁷⁷ *Opera* (1516), 3: 71r.

The textual similarities are striking. Both editors use the verbs *excusare* and *commonere* as well as the ablative absolute *inconsulto*. Erasmus writes that Epiphanius ordained a priest in John's diocese—in *illius diocesi*—as distinct from Jerome's monastery in Lelli's summary. Yet Erasmus' phrase *in illius diocesi* corresponds exactly with the title of the text in Lelli's table of contents, where Lelli writes that Epiphanius justified his ordination of priests (!) in John's diocese—in *illius diocesi*.

Erasmus' *argumentum* to the *Adversus Jovinianum* is a lengthy paratext of his composition, yet its opening words characterizing the target of Jerome's polemic resemble the identification of his rival in the *argumentum* that Lelli used. The Italian editor introduces Jovinian as a heretic, a former monk, who had become a clergyman: *IOVINIANUS heresiarcha de monacho clericus*. Apparently unwilling to call him a heretic but content to second Jerome's attack on his intelligence and style, Erasmus described Jovinian as a monk-turned-cleric, an obscure but wealthy figure, who was neither learned nor eloquent: *Iovinianus ex monacho clericus, homo obscurus, sed diues, nec eruditus tamen nec aeloquens*.⁷⁸ In a brief paraphrase, Erasmus condenses Rufinus' criticism of ep. 22 and notes that Sulpicius Severus remembered the letter "in a certain dialogue, but with praise."⁷⁹ Did Lelli's second *argumentum* to the letter give Erasmus the idea to do so?

Many of Erasmus' summaries are very brief and sometimes bland. Two printed lines inform readers of Jerome's letter to Gaudentius (ep. 128): "At the entreaty of his friend, he lays down what sort of basic education that a young girl, destined for virginity, should receive before she learns the difference between good and evil."⁸⁰ That he should use only one line to summarize a brief missive, such as the thank-you note to Marcella for her gifts (ep. 44), should not surprise us.⁸¹ Might he have shown more interest in the longer consolatory letter to Theodora (ep. 75)? Erasmus is content to write: "He consoles the widow Theodora of Spain on the death of her husband Lucinus of Baetica, whom she treated as a brother."⁸² Lelli managed more. He points out that Jerome was happy that Lucinus passed from the world's toils to peace and rest, praised his opposition

⁷⁸ Ibid., 3: 7v.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 1: 60r.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 1: 44v.

⁸¹ Ibid., 1: 59v.

⁸² Ibid., 1: 88v.

to the heresy of Basilides, gave Irenaeus of Lyon's account of this heresy's origins, and told of Lucinus' ambition to have his (Jerome's) books transcribed. That is why Lucinus sent six stenographers to Jerusalem. Both editors pass over in silence Jerome's admiration of Lucinus' generosity towards the poor and his praise of the departed man's "passion and zeal for the Scriptures."⁸³

Erasmus states that Jerome's first letter to Florentius does not require an *argumentum* especially because it is short; nor does the second letter stand in need of an *argumentum* or of any *scholia*.⁸⁴ No *argumentum* stands at the head of the short letter to Anthony (ep. 12) or to the *De viris illustribus*, which we can imagine would be difficult to summarize. Instead of prefacing the text with a summary, Erasmus adds a note to "the pious reader" at the end. The catalogue of writers was "a learned work and worthy of Jerome," but no one could read it without pronounced disappointment at the loss of "so many outstanding works of the most illustrious men." The few that survived have been mutilated, corrupted, and contaminated. Slumbering bishops and theologians failed to guard this most precious treasure of the Christian Church and thus let pass into oblivion "so many luminaries, so many distinguished champions and leaders of our faith," remarkable for their learning, eloquence, holiness, and, in some cases, martyrdom, but ousted by the "shabby tribe of writers" who wrote little *sententiae*, *summae*, *fascicula*, and *specula*. The very memory of these obviously scholastic successors to the Church Fathers make those endowed with noble and well-born spirits sick to their stomachs.⁸⁵

Readers lack any summary guidance for several pieces in the volume of exegetical letters. Only seven out of the twenty biblical prefaces receive summaries. No *argumenta* introduce thirteen other letters as well as the three genuine and three spurious texts beginning with the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* that Erasmus appends at the end of the volume. Such inattentiveness is puzzling. If, as Erasmus indicates in his rationale for the taxonomy of his edition, exegesis represents the culmination of Jerome's literary labours and Christian intellectual endeavour, why does his editorial commitment to supplying *argumenta* in the exegetical volume become at best haphazard

⁸³ CSEL 55: 33.

⁸⁴ *Opera* (1516), 1: 23r, 23v.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1: 99r, 138r.

and at worst negligent? Did he succumb to his weakness for working precipitously? Erasmus never repaired the deficiency in any edition subsequent to the first.

To be fair, Erasmus chose in several instances to enhance his *argumenta* with historical details. He pointed out more than once that Jerome had written a particular letter during his first Syrian sojourn.⁸⁶ Historical discontinuities attracted his attention. He asked readers to notice that in his letter to Augustine (ep. 103) Jerome, while calling Alypius his brother, nevertheless referred to him as pope. The obvious inference is that in Jerome's day the position of a bishop, who could also be classified as *papa*, was not so exalted that a priest could address him as an equal. Erasmus explains in the *argumentum* to the preface to the Books of Kings that Jerome classified the books of the (Hebrew) Bible into those that deserve attention first (the five books of the Pentateuch), those called the *hagiographa* (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Daniel, Chronicles, Ezra, Esther) and those that are "the *apocrypha* and outside the canon." (Erasmus forgets to identify the second division, after the Pentateuch, which consists of the prophets.) "But today," Erasmus comments, "writings are received into the canon that then were not in the canon."⁸⁷

Jerome could be and remain an outsider to historical developments. The view that held a man in his second marriage could not be bishop when he had married the first time before baptism Jerome called the "heresy of Cain" in his reply to Oceanus (ep. 69). Yet in "those times," the rules of bishops and "today" the law of the popes were not as cautious as Jerome thought. Erasmus reinforces this in the *antidotus* appended at the end of the letter: "Even if Jerome calls this the heresy of Cain and rages at this adversary with astonishing bile, the Church nevertheless follows the view of the latter, not of Jerome."⁸⁸

Erasmus liked to locate Jerome's correspondents with their family relationships and personal circumstances. Nepotian was the nephew of Heliodorus, that is, the son of his sister.⁸⁹ Demetrias was the daughter of Juliana, the niece of Proba; Furia the daughter of Titiana

⁸⁶ Ibid., 1: 95v, 96r, 3: 59v.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 3: 165r; 4: 7r.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 3: 145r, 148v.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 1: 5r, 9v.

and daughter-in-law of Probus the consul.⁹⁰ Of all the children of Paula, Eustochium embraced virginity. Blesilla was another daughter of Paula. After her husband died, she let a serious fever be a warning to her and converted completely to Christ.⁹¹ She was Paula's eldest daughter. After her in age came Paulina, who married Pammachius. This son-in-law of Paula had been a student with Jerome and was furthermore a cousin of Marcella. When Paulina died, he decided to become a monk and distributed his wealth among the poor.⁹² The daughter of Rogatus, Paula was a woman of the highest rank of the Roman aristocracy. She married Toxotius, and, at the death of her husband, "she began to profess contempt for the world." In other words, she embraced asceticism. Apart from the three daughters already mentioned, she had two other children: a daughter named Rufina and a son Toxotius, named after his father.⁹³ Similarly, Marcella was a daughter of the first order of the aristocracy. Widowed after seven months of marriage, she flatly rejected a proposal of marriage from the consul Cerealis and vowed to spend the rest of her life as a chaste widow. "She was," Erasmus reports, "the first of the aristocratic women in Rome to dare to profess the life of a nun, and she attracted many women to the same way of life."⁹⁴

In the volume of Jerome's controversies, Erasmus engages in historical theology. In the long *argumenta* to the *Adversus Jovinianum*, the *Dialogue against the Luciferians*, and the letter to Ctesiphon (ep. 133) against Pelagius, he provides a comprehensive context for Jerome's polemics derived from Jerome and other patristic sources. Jovinian tried to resurrect the heresy of Basilides, a second-century Gnostic. As with Lelli's *argumentum*, Erasmus rehearses Jovinian's teachings: virgins, widows, and wives enjoyed equal merit; the baptized could not relapse into sin; there was no difference between those who ate and those who fasted. Erasmus adds that Augustine attributed the second point to Pelagius and ascribed errors to Jovinian that Jerome did not mention, namely that Mary lost her virginity in giving birth to Jesus and that, in line with the "paradoxes of the Stoics," all sins were equal. Yet, Erasmus concludes, Augustine probably did not

⁹⁰ Ibid., 1: 27v, 35v.

⁹¹ Ibid., 1: 60r, 69r.

⁹² Ibid., 1: 73r; 3: 46r, 53r.

⁹³ Ibid., 1: 76v.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 1: 53r.

read Jovinian or Jerome's polemic against him. What he knew about Jovinian must have come from "popular rumour." Epiphanius of Salamis or Filaster (two fourth-century heresiologists whom Augustine used as sources for his *De haeresibus*) failed to record Jovinian in their catalogues of heretics. Erasmus also gives the reason for Jovinian's decision not to marry. He was not expecting any reward but wanted to be free of the discomforts of marriage.⁹⁵

The Arian heresy forms the background to understanding Jerome's treatise against the Luciferians. "No heresy," Erasmus' *argumentum* begins, "afflicted the churches of the entire world more seriously than that of the Arians, to the extent that it ensnared both a Roman pontiff and even emperors." Erasmus must have been thinking of Pope Liberius (352-366), whom he identified as an Arian in a *scholion* on Jerome's first letter to Damasus (ep. 15). Others had taken offence at using the term "three hypostases" (when referring to the Trinity), but the Arians, who rejected the words *ousia* and *homousion* as unprecedented, were "all the more pernicious because they were trained in secular literature and the niceties of Aristotle, as Jerome himself also bears witness here." The heresy originated with Arius, a priest from the church of Alexandria. The bishops gathered at the Council of Nicaea condemned his teachings. The attempt at restoring peace by readmitting those—among them were many bishops—who repented of their errors failed. The Arians persisted in their opposition. At synods called to address the crisis, some bishops looked the other way, while others openly defended the Arian heresy as Catholic. With the return from exile of Athanasius and Hilary, two proponents of Nicaea, lesser synods renewed the condemnation of Arianism. A debate began over two questions: Should bishops who had formerly agreed with Arius be received back (into the Catholic fold) without loss of their episcopal status? Should those baptized by Arians be rebaptized? These were the disputed questions in Jerome's *Dialogue against the Luciferians*. Jerome was against stripping bishops of their rank and, in contrast to Cyprian and Hilary, rebaptizing those baptized by Arians. Erasmus states that the heresy owes its origins to Bishop Lucifer of Smyrna, correcting Augustine, who in the *De haeresibus* wrote that Lucifer was Bishop of Cagliari (on Sardinia) and noted that Filaster and Epiphanius made no mention of him. Eras-

⁹⁵ Ibid., 3: 7v.

mus cites references to Lucifer in Bartolomeo Platina, the fifteenth-century historian of the papacy, Hilary, and Jerome apparently against Augustine.⁹⁶ Scholarship has confirmed Augustine's view, however. Erasmus invokes the *De viris illustribus* as one of his sources, but there he reads *Lucifer Caracalitanus episcopus* instead of *Caralitanus*, a variant of *Calaritanus* in the *De haeresibus*.⁹⁷ Whatever the reading, the Lucifer in question was not Bishop of Smyrna.

Erasmus gives readers a primer in the teachings of Pelagius when introducing the letter to Ctesiphon (ep. 133). Pelagius attributed so much to the free will that he said that human beings could attain salvation by virtue of their own merits without the grace of Christ. When criticized, he revised his position so as not to exclude grace, which made salvation easier to obtain. Since all were able to realize their requests by their own efforts, he condemned prayers in church for believers and non-believers alike. Pelagius abjured his teachings for fear of being condemned by the Council of Antioch. Furthermore, he believed that Adam's sin hurt no one except himself, that children were born in a state of innocence, and that the baptized are not freed from sins, which they lack, but received the dignity of the sacrament of adoption. At the insistence of the Africans, Pope Zosimus (417-418) condemned him, as did Augustine at the Council of Carthage. Prior to Zosimus, Pope Innocent I (402-417) had condemned Pelagius. At Ctesiphon's request, Jerome refuted his teachings, indicating the sources of his error.⁹⁸

In several respects, Erasmus' *argumenta* correspond with the portrait sketched in his *Vita Hieronymi*. Readers encounter in the summaries Jerome the great, the holy, the learned, and the eloquent. The second letter to Florentius (ep. 5) requires no *argumentum* and no *scholia*, except that it makes clear that St. Jerome stayed for some time in Trier, an ancient German metropolis on the banks of the Mosel. In Erasmus' opinion, the city has every right to boast of having "so excellent a man" as its guest, especially for a considerable length of time. Jerome's letter of consolation to Pammachius on the death of Paulina, although short, displays much learning and eloquence, for it is written to "a learned and eloquent man by the most

⁹⁶ Ibid., 3: 61r-61v (*argumentum*); 3: 60v (*scholion*).

⁹⁷ Ibid., 1: 134v, 141r. For Augustine's chapter on the Luciferians, see CCSL 46: 336-37.

⁹⁸ *Opera* (1516), 3: 114r.

learned and most eloquent man of all.” In the *Adversus Jovinianum*, Jerome “unfurls and moreover revels in, as it were, all the powers of his mind and eloquence” to refute his uneducated and spectacularly rhetorically deficient opponent.⁹⁹

On occasion, as in the *argumentum* to the letter to Gaudentius (ep. 128), Erasmus makes Jerome the subject of his sentence without mentioning his name. At other times, not simply *Hieronymus* but *divus Hieronymus* is present in an *argumentum*. St. Jerome wrote to Heliodorus from the desert, instructed Marcella in the Scriptures, replied to those who jeered at Blesilla for deciding to become a nun, amused himself (*ludit*) with the craft of writing history in the letter to Innocent (ep. 1), tangled with the Luciferians, refused to be in communion with John of Jerusalem, answered the exegetical questions of Aman-dus, and must have had a wonderful reputation for Algasia and Hedibia to send a messenger, Apodemius, to lay before him their queries.¹⁰⁰ But Sabinianus, the delinquent deacon, disparaged “the reputation of the holy man,” and Rufinus hurled accusations at “the most holy man.”¹⁰¹

Erasmus’ praise of Jerome’s rhetorical talents begins with the very first letter in his edition. Practically still a boy, Jerome, in his letter to Heliodorus (ep. 14)

gushes forth with metaphors, allegories, even fanciful ones, exclamations, dilemmas, and, furthermore, the other ornaments of this type of discourse. His endeavour in this sort of skill is such that you can recognize a beginner, but a beginner of supreme promise.

The next letter, addressed to Nepotian (ep. 52), is written in the exhortatory style, “in which St. Jerome marvellously excelled, just as in the others too.” The letter to Ageruchia (ep. 123), in which Jerome advises his widowed correspondent against marrying a second time, is “particularly learned and eloquent.” The opening laudatory section proceeds as if by digression, a characteristic of Jerome. He deals with the subject matter according to topics (*argumentis*) in the second section. In the third, “he again wanders off into the commonplace of the misfortunes of human affairs. But it is marvelous how skillfully

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1: 23v, 73r; 3: 7v.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1: 2v, 53r, 69r, 106r; 3: 61v, 73v; 4: 60r, 70r.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 1: 103v, 60r.

the superior craftsman (*optimus artifex*) adapts both digressions to the topic at hand (*ad propositum argumentum*).¹⁰²

In the *Vita*, defending Jerome's reputation for eloquence, Erasmus praises his *festivitas* or merriment "with which he wonderfully seasons even the saddest subjects."¹⁰³ Erasmus' rhetorical analysis in the *argumenta* takes stock of Jerome's mirthful rhetoric. In the letter to Eustochium acknowledging receipt of her gifts (ep. 31), Jerome made merry (*lusi*) "with certain holy jests." His mystical interpretation of the gifts leads to a moral lesson about what sort of jesting is appropriate for Christians "so that they might experience piety and learning equally." He used jokes in his allegorical interpretation of Marcella's gifts, and his letter to Paul of Concordia (ep. 10) is "full of merry jokes that are none the less holy." His defence, sent to Domnio, of the *Adversus Jovinianum* against a nameless, vainglorious monk is a "completely droll letter, from head to toe."¹⁰⁴

As we saw in the previous chapter, Erasmus condones Jerome's vehement polemical style in the *Vita*. In the expanded preface of 1524 to the volume of controversies, he admits that some might think Jerome had forgotten "Christian modesty" in his violent attacks on heretics and on those who slandered him. Yet these are easily amenable to a favourable interpretation when one considers "the ardent and naturally vigorous disposition of the man, which, furthermore, is more properly frank than abusive," as well as Jerome's "moral integrity and innocent way of life," which harms practically nobody yet is not used to suffer harm. While the first volume of the edition displayed Jerome's eloquence and revealed his "remarkable holiness," this second volume will show him "hurling lightning bolts and thundering" and manifest the "invincible firmness of his resolve against all the attacks of the wicked."¹⁰⁵

Erasmus' *argumenta* show, however, that it was not easy consistently to approve of Jerome's language. In the summary of the letter of Epiphanius, quoted above, Erasmus adds that Jerome translated the letter because he hated John of Jerusalem and Rufinus. Jerome raged against Vigilantius with such abuse that "I am compelled," Erasmus confesses, "to wish for rather more moderation in him." He goes on

¹⁰² Ibid., 1: 2v, 5r, 39r.

¹⁰³ *Erasmii Opuscula*, 186.

¹⁰⁴ *Opera* (1516), 1: 59r, 59v; 3: 51v.

¹⁰⁵ Allen 5: 465. 467. ep. 1451.

to disagree with Jerome. Gennadius thought Vigilantius was eloquent but denied that he had any knowledge of Scripture. Whereas Jerome attributed neither eloquence nor biblical erudition to Vigilantius, Erasmus detects modest elegant expression in Jerome's quotations from his opponent. One could say that, in their dispute, Augustine and Jerome went at it with hammer and tongs, or, in Erasmus' words, they entered the lists like blindfolded gladiators (*andabatae*). Erasmus faithfully summarizes Augustine's letter to Jerome (ep. 110) when he writes that Augustine tries to appease Jerome, whom he believes he has offended, and "deplores the highly savage animosity (*deplorat simultatem tam atrocem*) that arose between Rufinus and Jerome, formerly the closest of friends, urging them to concord." In the *Vita*, Erasmus, as we saw, characterizes Jerome's attack on John of Jerusalem as a model of restraint. The *argumentum* to the polemic, on the other hand, registers not only its erudition but also Erasmus' lament that one had to read with sorrow that "so many tumultuous factions and feuds took place among such great men."¹⁰⁶

In other places, Erasmus seeks to excuse Jerome. If only St. Jerome had written against the Luciferians in the same way he debated with others, namely with fewer insults. "Yet it is fitting," Erasmus continues, "to pardon this vice, if it is a vice at all, in view of his, in some respects, enormous and unrestrained zeal for the Christian faith." Since Pelagius was a going concern and a man of respectable learning, St. Jerome in his *Dialogue against the Pelagians* employed fictitious names "so as to cause less offence to his opponent and at the same time to give him the opportunity of changing his mind."¹⁰⁷

In his *argumenta*, Erasmus repeats the quotations from Horace and Publilius Syrus that he deploys in the *Vita* in the context of Jerome's quarrel with Rufinus. From Jerome's letter to the latter (ep. 81) it appears that their quarrel had transformed into friendship,

but as Horace says, "a poorly mended friendship joins together to no avail and is broken" (*Epistulae* 1.3.31-32). Then with the slanted praise of Rufinus [Jerome] is drawn into the suspicion of the Origenist heresy. As the friends even rushed ahead, the ancient wounds of hostility broke open again, and whatever harmony that had existed erupted into open

¹⁰⁶ *Opera* (1516), 3: 55r, 153r, 158v, 73v. Gennadius described Vigilantius as *homo lingua politus*; Richardson, *Hieronymus, liber de viris inlustribus*; Gennadius, *liber de viris inlustribus*, 74.

¹⁰⁷ *Opera* (1516), 3: 61v, 118r.

warfare. He warns, moreover, that in future he should not to praise him in a similar way.

Clearly, Rufinus was responsible for the shattered friendship. He provoked "a public contest of hostility" with the invectives and threats contained in a letter and in his *Apology* addressed to Jerome, Erasmus notes in the *argumentum* to the third book of Jerome's *Apology against Rufinus*. Jerome replied with "great frankness," but the reader should not take offence at this. Erasmus explains: "Everyone laments their own faults, but we easily treat those of others with moderation. Jerome had an innately impetuous temperament." Combine the trustworthiness of his conscientious mind, his free manner of speech, and his "unworthy challenger" (*laccessitor improbus*), then the saying of Publilius applies: "Patience too often injured turns into rage." "Finally," Erasmus points out to his reader, "the abuse was intolerable, which, to be sure, branded him with the mark of heresy. Above all, you should remember that, although Jerome was most learned and although he was a saint, he was still a man."¹⁰⁸

Was Jerome a theologian? Erasmus in the *Vita* insists that he was, but in the *argumenta*, he never explicitly refers to him as such. Of course, the *argumenta* in the volume of controversies show him caught up in the great doctrinal disputes of his day. One could assume that his refutation of heresies give him the status of a theologian. Jerome is also a Christian teacher. To Nepotian he issued "some most healthy precepts" for disdaining wealth and fleeing the company of secular people, especially women. He discusses "the teaching of piety, frugality in dress, buildings, and food, the avoidance of the praise of human beings and of disparagement, the observance of silence, the avoidance of gifts, the distribution of alms to the poor." Rusticus the monk also learns to keep away from women. He should take every precaution not to associate with those who vilify others. Jerome points out that a young monk is better off living in community with other monks than on his own. He urges Laeta to instill in her daughter the rudiments of Christian piety so that in learning holy songs she might savour Christ and again lays down "most healthy precepts" about dress, eating, the way in which a young person should avoid contamination from worldly people, the Sacred Scriptures, and the rejection of apocryphal writings. Not only does Jerome console

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 3: 89r, 105r.

Paula on the death of Blesilla; he also “fiercely rebukes” her, “showing that it was not proper for Christians to weep excessively over the departed for a life well lived.” He lays before Paulinus of Nola the world of the Bible in order all the more to fill him with the passion for studying it.¹⁰⁹

Without grasping the testimony of the Scriptures Helvidius tried to prove that Mary, the mother of God, after the virgin birth of Jesus, had several sons with Joseph, and these are the ones called in the Scriptures the “brothers of the Lord.” Jerome refuted Helvidius, confirming Mary’s perpetual virginity, “even if this is not openly written in the Scriptures but has come down to us, by hand as it were, from the tradition of the apostles and the holy Fathers, and has been approved by the consensus of all Christians.”¹¹⁰

Clausi apparently found this statement from the *argumentum* to the *Adversus Helvidium* surprising, coming from Erasmus who believed that true theology should be founded on the Bible. If it does not actually cast a shadow on the truth of the teaching on Mary’s perpetual virginity, then the appeal to tradition surely undermines its credibility.¹¹¹ The consensus of the Church, however, was a cardinal principle of Erasmus’ ecclesiology. With the advent of the Reformation he invoked the consensus in defence of Catholic doctrine and worship, such as the freedom of the will, Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist, Trinitarian *formulae*, auricular confession, and prayers to the saints. Yet even before Luther’s break with Rome the concept appears in his writings.¹¹²

What is remarkable about the *argumentum* is that in revealing an important theological principle Erasmus betrays Jerome’s approach. Jerome does not set the ancient tradition of the Church against Helvidius’ scriptural arguments. On the contrary, he argues primarily on the basis of Scripture. He goes forward with “the axe of the Gospel” to hack at “the roots of an unproductive tree.” If, according to Matthew 1: 25, Joseph had no sexual relations with Mary *until* she

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 1: 5r, 18v, 24r, 71r; 4: 2v.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 3: 2r.

¹¹¹ Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre*, 229.

¹¹² Hilmar M. Pabel, “The Peaceful People of Christ: The Irenic Ecclesiology of Erasmus of Rotterdam,” in *Erasmus’ Vision of the Church*, ed. Hilmar M. Pabel (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers), 77-81; Pabel, *Conversing with God: Prayer in Erasmus’ Pastoral Writings* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 96-98.

gave birth to a son, then Helvidius reasons that they could have had intercourse after Jesus' birth. Jerome, of course, will have none of this and shows that Helvidius' concept of the controversial conjunction "is broken to pieces by the authority of the same Scripture." He repeats his arguments against the claims about Jesus' scriptural brothers to defy the accusation that Helvidius' opinion has been "torn apart not by the testimonies of Scripture but by specious debate." When Helvidius adduces Tertullian and Victorinus in support of his position, Jerome prefers not to forsake "the source of truth" in pursuit of "the streams of opinions." Nevertheless, he quickly calls to witness Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin the Martyr, "and many other apostolic and eloquent men."¹¹³ Erasmus' belief that tradition, not Scripture, validates the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary subverts the central function of Scripture in Jerome's theological methodology.

A synoptic reading of the *argumenta* by Erasmus and Vittori shows that the latter frequently plagiarized the former. This undermines his rejection of Erasmus' *argumenta* as "useless and false" in the preface addressed to Pope Pius IV.¹¹⁴ Elsewhere I have shown Vittori's dependence on Erasmus when the Italian editor composed his *argumentum* to the *Adversus Jovinianum*.¹¹⁵ His use of Erasmian *argumenta* as resources for his own introductions to Jerome's letters begins with the very first letter. Introducing the early letter to Heliodorus (ep. 14), Vittori, like Erasmus, points out that Jerome was a youth, practically still a boy (*pene puer*), when he wrote the letter at a time when the study of rhetoric was still his passion (*calentibus adhuc rhetoricum studiis*). The Latin expressions are originally Jerome's, who remembered the letter when he later wrote to Nepotian (ep. 52).¹¹⁶ Erasmus reiterated them, and Vittori followed suit. In several other *argumenta*, Vittori borrows or adapts phrases from Erasmus. Consider their *argumenta* to the letter (ep. 7) to Chromatius, Jovinus, and Eusebius:

¹¹³ PL 23: 184A, 189A, 195A, 201B-202A.

¹¹⁴ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 1: first recto after the title page.

¹¹⁵ Hilmar M. Pabel, "Credit, Paratexts, and Editorial Strategies in Erasmus of Rotterdam's Editions of Jerome," in *Cognition and the Book: Typologies of Formal Organization of Knowledge in the Printed Book of the Early Modern Period*, ed. Karl A. E. Enenkel and Wolfgang Neuber (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 249-50.

¹¹⁶ Jerome: CSEL 54: 414; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 2v; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 1: 1.

Erasmus

Chromatius & Eusebius fratres, una cum Ioviniano amico & matre, nec non sororibus uirginibus, eadem in domo sancte uiuebant. His omnibus una epistola satisfacit Hieronymus, comprobat laudes Bonosi, de quo scripserant. Sororem suam illis commendat, & sanctum illorum contubernium laudibus uehit.

The brothers Chromatius and Eusebius along with their friend Jovinian and mother as well as their virgin sisters were leading a holy life in the same house. Jerome satisfied all of them with one letter; he approved their praises of Bonosus, of whom they had written. He commends his sister to them and extolls with praises their holy fellowship.¹¹⁶

Vittori

CHROMATIVM, et Eusebium fratres una cum Iouino amico, necnon matre et sororibus uirginibus eadem in domo sancte uiuentes, omnes Stridonenses resalutat. Bonosum laudat, et sororem suam illis commendat.

He sends greetings again to the brothers Chromatius and Eusebius along with Jovinus their friend and also their mother and virgin sisters, leading a holy life in the same house, all of them Stridonians. He praises Bonosus and commends his sister to them.¹¹⁷

From Erasmus Vittori adopts the strategy of beginning the *argumentum* with the name of the addressee(s) of the letter or of the person who is the subject of Jerome's letter, as in his epitaphs or eulogies. He applies this strategy much more assiduously than Erasmus. In the case of ep. 7, Vittori reworks the Erasmian paratext by putting Chromatius and Eusebius in the accusative case, objects of the verb *resalutat*. Erasmus made them the subjects of the principal verb *vivebant*. Vittori preserves the verb but converts it into the gerundive *viventes*. He adds that Jerome's correspondents were from Strido. Elaborating on this in a *scholion*, Vittori writes that it is clear that Chromatius and Eusebius were not natives of Strido but deserve to be called Stridonians because they lived close to or within the city. That Jerome commends his sister to them is evidence of this.¹¹⁹ The second and final sentence of Vittori's *argumentum* contracts that of Erasmus, briefly noting Jerome's praise of Bonosus and his commendation of his sister. He reproduces Erasmus' words in expressing the commendation. The main difference between the *argumenta* is that Vittori

¹¹⁷ *Opera* (1516), 1: 98r.

¹¹⁸ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis et libri contra haereticos*, 1: 135.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3: 328.

refers to the friend of Chromatius and Eusebius as Jovinus, not Jovinian.

Vittori did not always make use of Erasmus' "useless" *argumenta*. He was perfectly capable of composing his own. In the many instances where Erasmus did not supply an *argumentum*, Vittori did, except for the *De viris illustribus*. His summaries of the exegetical letters were often more detailed than those of Erasmus.

Yet in the case of two such letters, Jerome's preface to his translation of Joshua and his letter to Vitalis (ep. 72), Vittori, although he in large part produced his own summaries, could not keep from glancing at Erasmus' *argumenta*. Erasmus limited himself to one sentence when summarizing the preface: *Refellit calumnias aemulorum: & hoc opere confecto, pollicetur sese ad intermissam prophetarum interpretationem rediturum*—"He refutes the malicious accusations of his rivals, and now that this work is complete, he promises to return to the interrupted translation of the prophets." Vittori's Jerome, who was busy translating Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and Esther, by no means disparaged the Septuagint. Nevertheless, because of the great diversity of editions and the disagreement of various manuscripts, he drew what was true and authentic from the pure Hebrew source. After summing up the preface in his own words, Vittori concludes by resorting to those of Erasmus: *Hoc autem opere confecto, se ad intermissam prophetarum interpretationem rediturum, pollicetur*—"But now that this work is complete, he promises to return to the interrupted translation of the prophets." Erasmus comments in the *argumentum* to the letter to Vitalis that Jerome, through the calculation of years, shows that Solomon and Ahaz fathered children before puberty. "But he discourages the anxious treatment of questions of this sort, since there is supposedly no benefit at all in a literal reading, but much in allegory"—*Verum ab huiusmodi quaestionibus anxie tractandis dehortatur, quod in littera nihil sit fructus, in allegoria plurimum*. After a considerably more detailed analysis of the problem of the age of the two kings, Vittori similarly concludes: *Verum ab huiusmodi quaestionibus anxie discutiendis dehortatur, quod fructus non in littera, sed in allegoria sit*—"But he discourages the anxious discussion of questions of this sort, since supposedly there is benefit not in a literal reading, but in allegory."¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 6v, 32v; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 9, 58.

The Jerome of Vittori's *argumenta* is much like that of Erasmus. He is a holy, eloquent, and learned man. The Italian editor regularly, almost perfunctorily, writes of *D. Hieronymus*, St. Jerome. Less frequently, he refers to the *vir sanctus*, the holy man. Vittori, like Erasmus, esteems Jerome's way with words in the letters to Heliodorus and Nepotian (epp. 14, 52), and his eloquence in the *Adversus Iovinianum*.¹²¹ Erasmus observed the jesting in the short missives of gratitude to Eustochium and Marcella (epp. 31, 44); Vittori comments that Jerome wrote gaily (*festiviter*).¹²² He also notices that Jerome "elegantly" teaches Furia to safeguard chastity along with her reputation, "most elegantly" recounts the life of Marcella to Principia, "learnedly and elegantly" expounds for Fabiola the mystical meaning of the vestments of the Jewish priests, "piously and eloquently" explains Psalm 90 to Cyprian the priest, and "learnedly and eloquently" interprets Psalm 45 for Principia.¹²³ Jerome's demolition of the "absurdities" in Helvidius' "heretical book" is no less eloquent than erudite. Similarly, he answers the twelve exegetical questions posed by Hedibia and the eleven of Algasia "no less piously than learnedly." Algasia expected solutions to her difficulties from "a most holy and a most erudite man."¹²⁴

More than Erasmus, Vittori's *argumenta* stress Jerome's contribution to biblical scholarship in light of his proficiency in Hebrew. The exegesis that he offered to Cyprian was faithful to the *Hebraica veritas*. Pope Damasus wanted Jerome to explain "from the Hebrew verity" the meaning of the acclamation in the Gospel, "Hosanna to the son of David," and Jerome complied by drawing "from the Hebrew source."¹²⁵ In *argumenta* to the biblical prefaces, Vittori clarifies that Jerome translated the Pentateuch out of Hebrew because he wanted to serve the Church, not because he wanted to improve upon the Septuagint and that recourse to the Hebrew was necessary owing to the corruptions in the Septuagint. Jerome explains how he translated Judith out of Hebrew. Esther "he faithfully translated out of Hebrew word for word." Since Jerome proposed to approach all scriptural questions by comparing readings, that is by restoring on the basis of

¹²¹ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 1: 1, 4, 2: 12.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 1: 76, 77.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 1: 41, 67, 3: 43, 78, 84.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 2: 3; 3: 116, 129.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3: 78, 101, 102.

the *Hebraica veritas* the many passages from the common version of the Bible that were at variance with the Septuagint and other translations, it was only right that he started with Genesis. Vittori declares the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* “a learned and erudite work.” Jerome’s *Hebrew Names* is “a learned and especially necessary work.”¹²⁶

Whereas the emphasis on Jerome’s eloquence and learning in the *argumenta* repair a deficiency in Vittori’s biography of the Church Father, the confessional cues of the *Vita Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, falso antea ab Erasmo relata* find their counterparts in the summaries of Jerome’s texts. In the *Vita*, Vittori, as we saw in Chapter 3, appeals to Jerome’s first letter to Damasus (ep. 15) as a source for his fidelity to the teaching authority of the Roman Church. The *argumentum* to the letter reveals that “the holy man” on the matter of the divine hypostases in dispute at Antioch “asks what he should believe, consulting the Roman Church, as the mother of the other [churches] and to which the more important questions of the faith are referred.”¹²⁷ In three *argumenta*, Vittori links Jerome’s writings to sixteenth-century religious controversy. Everyone can clearly discern from the letter to Rusticus the monk (ep. 125) that “the life and profession of monks was introduced into the Church, such as it is today, as an ancient and sacred institution, not as an invention of the devil, as the heretics blasphemously claim.” “The holy man” replies to Riparius, who alerted him of how Vigilantius the heretic “rages, just as the innovators do today, against the relics of the martyrs and the solemn vigils of Christians that transpired in their [i.e. the martyrs’] churches.” “If only the dabblers and more perceptive (*occulatiores*) Vigilantians of our times” would submit to “the authority and arguments of so great a doctor” and go to sleep, Vittori wishes at the end of his summary of Jerome’s treatise against Vigilantius.¹²⁸

Scholia

In antiquity, *scholia* (σχόλια) seem originally to have been transcriptions of lectures having to do with the interpretation of texts and thus served as a commentary. Since notes commenting on a text

¹²⁶ Ibid., 3: 8, 11, 12, 15, 168, 254.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 2: 89.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 1: 16, 2: 80, 81.

often appeared on the margins of a text, *scholia* eventually took on the meaning of marginal annotations or commentaries. They also came to signify excerpts from a text, as distinct from commentary. Decisive for the development of the term within Christianity were Origen's all but vanished biblical commentaries, known as *Scholia*. In the prologue to his translation of Origen's *Homilies on Ezekiel*, Jerome translated the title as *Excerpta*, explaining that in these Origen briefly touched upon obscure or difficult passages. Rufinus quoted the explanation in his *Apology against Jerome*. Jerome's characterization of Origen's *Scholia* became in the Middle Ages the standard definition of the scholiastic genre. Although humanists such as Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and Josse Clichtove wrote commentaries that they called *scholia*, Ueli Dill maintains that Erasmus gave the term wide currency in the West through his edition of Jerome.¹²⁹

Erasmus had not thought of his commentary on Jerome as *scholia* until a letter of 1 September 1513. He was so eager to emend Jerome and elucidate him with *scholia* that he felt as if inspired by some god.¹³⁰ Clausi viewed this first application of the term to the edition as a substantial reorientation of the edition's critical apparatus "in the direction of a larger, autonomous significance" of Erasmus' scholarly labours.¹³¹ That may be the case, but Dill's view also has merit. He saw the identification of the commentary as *scholia* as a way in which Erasmus made himself the intellectual heir of Origen, whose legacy Jerome mediated. Erasmus would have encountered Jerome's characterization of Origen's *Scholia* as quoted by Rufinus.¹³² Erasmus' identification of his New Testament annotations as *scholia* and the reference to his commentary on Pseudo-Cato's moral precepts and the *sententiae* of Publilius Syrus as *scholia* in an edition first published in 1514 speak against investing too much programmatic significance in the way he labelled his commentary on passages from Jerome.¹³³

Whatever his impetus, Erasmus' inclusion of *scholia* in his editorial apparatus was an innovation in the printed record of Jerome's letters. Marginal elucidations in manuscript *epistolaria* set a precedent for

¹²⁹ Ueli Dill, "Zur Übernahme des Begriffs σχόλιον in die lateinische Sprache," *Museum Helveticum* 61 (2004): 93, 96-99, 106-107, 115-17.

¹³⁰ Allen 1: 531, ep. 273.

¹³¹ Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre*, 209.

¹³² Dill, "Zur Übernahme," 121.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 120 and n. 114, 123.

Erasmus' much more thorough commentary. Did he encounter manuscripts with *scholia* in the margins, and if so, might these have influenced him to produce his own *scholia*? He was certainly aware of medieval paratexts. While collating manuscripts in preparation for his edition of Hilary (1523), he discovered "little prefaces" added to the beginning of some books, "flourishes" added at the end, and "rags" sewn onto the middle by some dabbler who tried to explain more completely and clearly what Hilary had said.¹³⁴

Fifty years ago, Denys Gorce asserted that Erasmus' expertise in patristic editing manifested itself in his *scholia* which "still remain, for the scholar and commentator on Jerome, an unparalleled resource (*une mine inégalable*)"¹³⁵ Modern scholarship has devoted much less energy to mining this trove of commentary than Erasmus' sixteenth-century readers. Many of these were critics, such as Diego López Zúñiga (Stunica), Alberto Pio, Mariano Vittori, and the censors who compiled the *Index expurgatorius* of 1571 and who signalled a long series of editorial comments, including *scholia*, for expurgation or deletion. For these readers the *scholia* were a source of impiety, heresy, and, in the case of Vittori, editorial and philological ineptitude.¹³⁶ Peter Canisius sardonically scorned "the *scholia*, or, should I say, the scoria," the slag with which Erasmus besmirched Jerome's letters.¹³⁷ The more equanimous assessment attempted here is based on an extensive, albeit incomplete, reading. One does not need to read all of the more than 4,000 *scholia* to discern patterns in the editorial commentary.

Erasmus knew that *scholia* should be brief. In the letter to Ageruchia (ep. 123), Jerome relates the destruction wrought in all of Gaul between the Alps and Pyrenees by a series of peoples: the Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alans, Gepids, Heruli, Saxons, Burgundians, and Alamanni. At the lemma *Quadus Vandalus*, Erasmus notes the disagreements about the names and origins of these peoples. It is enough to know that they came from the frontiers of Germany and Gaul and that they traversed not only Gaul but also Italy, Pannonia,

¹³⁴ Allen 5: 173, ep. 1334.

¹³⁵ Denys Gorce, "La patristique dans la réforme d'Érasme," in *Festgabe Joseph Lortz*, 2 vols., ed. Erwin Iserloh and Peter Manns (Baden-Baden: Bruno Grimm, 1958), 1: 273.

¹³⁶ For details, see Hilmar M. Pabel, "Sixteenth-Century Catholic Criticism of Erasmus' Edition of St. Jerome," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 6 (2004): 234-60.

¹³⁷ PCE 3: 280.

Spain, and Greece. “Anyone,” continues Erasmus, “who wants a more complete understanding of these peoples should read the seventh book of Orosius’ history. Brevity befits *scholia*.”¹³⁸ Erasmus clearly prefers not to comment on any of the tribes and believes he has fulfilled the responsibility of a scholiast by pointing readers to the *History against the Pagans* by Paulus Orosius, the contemporary of Jerome and Augustine.¹³⁹

The geographical information that Erasmus supplies generally adheres to the rule formulated in the commentary on the letter to Ageruchia: *scholiis brevitatis convenit*. Erasmus closely follows Paula on her travels as Jerome recounts her life in the letter to her bereaved daughter Eustochium (ep. 108). The most noble island of Rhodes, opposite Lycia, is part of coastal Asia. According to Pliny, it once had seventy towns. Formerly called Ophiusa, Rhodes is twenty miles from the coast. Elsewhere Jerome considers it one of the Cyclades Islands. Lydda is “a maritime city of Palestine.” Its name was changed to Diospolis, the city of Jupiter. Pliny mentions it in the fifth book, that is, of his *Natural History* (5.15.70). Bethlehem, six miles south of Jerusalem, is on the road to Hebron, as Jerome says. “According to St. Jerome,” the body of St. Mark the evangelist lies buried in Alexandria, an Egyptian city shut in as it were between Africa, Egypt, and the sea. Alexandria takes its name from its founder Alexander the Great. Pliny refers to it in the fifth book (*Natural History* 5.11.62).¹⁴⁰ These are but four of the many geographical *scholia* in a thicket of commentary spanning slightly more than eight folio pages.

Erasmus transgresses the precept of brevity on the very page on which he lays it down. Reporting to Ageruchia the news of devastation, Jerome writes that “Mogontiacus, once a noble city, has been captured and destroyed, and many thousands of people were massacred in its church.” Erasmus is more interested in praising the Mainz of his era than in locating it. Today it still survives as a noble city. The prominent seat of an archbishop, Mainz also boasts a

¹³⁸ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 92; Erasmus: 1516, 1: 40v.

¹³⁹ On Paulus Orosius, see *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd ed., ed. Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1078, s. v. “Orosius,” by E. David Hunt.

¹⁴⁰ *Opera* (1516), 1: 77r, 77v, 78r, 80r. Jerome includes Rhodes among the Cyclades Islands in his *Commentary on Jeremiah*. See CCSL 74: 244.

renowned school of *bonae litterae* and many old monuments worth seeing. It is famous not only by virtue of what non-resident old authors have written but also because of its native literary talent. Among the many scholars of all branches of learning that it has produced, Erasmus singles out Dietrich Gresemund (Theodoricus Gresmundus), a man who by his very nature was fashioned for “kindness (*humanitas*), literature, and that truly Attic eloquence.” Gresemund (d. 1512), who associated with German humanists such as Konrad Celtis, Jakob Wimpfeling, and Mutianus Rufus, would have found favour with Erasmus for his attack on scholasticism and his call for Church reform expressed in his *Lucubraciunculae*, published in Mainz in 1494. All students of literature are greatly indebted to Mainz, the birthplace of the printing press, “that excellent and almost divine invention.” The people, once counted among the Gauls, dwelling on “the nearer bank of the Rhine” is now, Erasmus puns, so German, that is, so authentic, culturally and morally, that no other could be more German.

While Moguntiacus has been destroyed, Argentoratus, among other cities, has been ceded to Germany, Jerome laments. Erasmus again concentrates on the contemporary cultural value of Strassburg, not on its location, nor its ancient significance:

Today this city is, if you will, the most prosperous of German cities (*inter Germanicas*), and not only in wealth. Moreover, it enjoys the benefit not simply of the Rhine that flows by, and of perpetual freedom and lasting peace, which it already for a long time has enjoyed under the most clement and always august Emperor Maximilian, but, more important, of the character of its citizens and of the prudence as well as the integrity of its magistrates.

No people is more honoured “either for its excellent virtue or intellectual abilities.” Thus no other city “abounds more in the best men, in whom moral integrity commends erudition and erudition adorns moral integrity.” Erasmus concludes: “It would be a pleasure to dwell on the praises of this never sufficiently praised city, except that I fear that someone might say that I, oblivious of *scholia*, am writing a panegyric.”¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 92; Erasmus: 1516, 1: 40v. On Gresemund, see *Neue Deutsche Biographie* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1953–), 7: 48–49, s. v. “Gresemund(t), Theoderich (Dietrich) d. J.” by Heinrich Grimm.

Erasmus' Germanophilic outbursts can also fulfill the scholiastic function of shedding light on dark and difficult places by making relevant to his contemporaries cities and other phenomena mentioned in ancient texts. Admittedly, this strategy risks obsolescence, diminishing the enduring objective value of commentary for posterity. A few *scholia* scattered throughout the edition of Jerome make observations about Erasmus' present. Jacques Chomarat described them as "incidental reflections, fleetingly evoking personal recollections of Erasmus," that reveal his "habit of looking for an image of a living reality" in the texts upon which he comments.¹⁴² Jerome in the letter to Nepotian (ep. 52) expresses his contempt for the wealthy clergyman who takes delight in gossip, impudence, marketplaces, city streets, and "the booths of physicians." By *medicorum tabernae* Jerome means pharmacies, Erasmus points out. The idle and chatterboxes frequent these and also barbershops, as is still the custom "today" in Venice.¹⁴³ Naples is the site of another enduring custom. There aristocratic women retain "young and handsome men" to accompany them. Jerome's use of the word *assecla*, an attendant, in the *Adversus Jovinianum* inspired this comment.¹⁴⁴ In his *Life of Hilarion*, Jerome explains that the soft sand of the coast of Palestine and Egypt becomes rough as it hardens into rock. This reminds Erasmus of a similar occurrence that "we see in Britain at London." As the water flows away, the mud of the riverbank (*limus marginis*)—Erasmus is obviously thinking of the Thames—hardens into rock while retaining its original form as mud. Hilarion cast out a demon from a virgin. "In our times," recalls Erasmus, "we saw a much more ominous case in a crowded monastery of virgins situated in Hainaut." It greatly perplexed "the most humane prelate and veritable father" Hendrik, Bishop of Cambrai and scion of the noble house of Bergen (d. 1502), at whose court Erasmus, as a young man, was then residing. Hendrik consulted many learned and holy persons. In the end, "this evil" was not vanquished before every virgin possessed by a demon had died.¹⁴⁵

More often than not Erasmus comports himself as a scholarly philologist, not as a journalist. He gives the meaning of Greek and

¹⁴² Chomarat, *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Érasme*, 1: 540.

¹⁴³ Jerome: CSEL 54: 423; Erasmus: 1516, 1: 5v.

¹⁴⁴ Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 29v; Jerome: PL 23: 277B.

¹⁴⁵ Jerome: PL 23: 36C, 38A-39A; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 101r, 101v.

Hebrew words and phrases in Jerome's letters. He routinely identifies Jerome's quotations from and allusions to classical authors and the Scriptures. References to Virgil and Horace abound in the *scholia*. Besides geographical details Erasmus also provides historical and lexical information.

Readers of the polemics against Rufinus learn more about Jerome's references to ancient history. With a hint of misogyny Erasmus reports that Sardanapulus was king of Assyria, "a man more corrupt than any woman." Carneades was the leader of the New Academy (in Athens). All Academicians had this in common, namely "to affirm nothing, but to pursue what was probable." Darius was "the wealthiest king of Persia," and King Croesus of Lydia was "renowned for his wealth, as was Midas also." Fulvia, the wife of Mark Antony, instigated the death of Cicero. She allegedly pierced his tongue with a pin.¹⁴⁶

Biblical history and ecclesiastical history necessarily find their way into the *scholia* too. As one can read in Numbers 25, Phineas, whom Jerome mentions in the letter to Fabiola on priestly vestments (ep. 64), was the son of the priest Eleazar and the nephew of Aaron. He slew a Hebrew man and his Midianite strumpet with a dagger, stabbing them in the genitals. Eulogizing Fabiola in a letter to Oceanus (ep. 77), Jerome reports that all of Rome gathered for her funeral. The churches shook with the echo of the sublime *alleluia*. "It should be noted," Erasmus adds, "that it was the custom for *alleluia* to be sung at the funeral of Christians, as if by well-wishers, because [the deceased] were thought to have ascended to heaven." In his *Apology against John of Jerusalem*, Jerome rhetorically asks John whether Epiphanius accused him of the heresy of Eunomius. Erasmus comments that Eunomius, the Bishop of Cyzicus, was a friend of Aetius, whose doctrines he embraced. An inadequate interpreter of Scripture, Eunomius agreed with Arius on many points.¹⁴⁷

Everywhere Erasmus explains the meaning of words and clarifies idiomatic usage. In the letter in which he tells the story of the woman wrongly accused of adultery (ep. 1), Jerome describes himself to Innocent as *homo, qui necdum scalnum in lacu rexi*. "Smaller boats are called *scalmi*," Erasmus comments. Thus Jerome is "a man who has not yet

¹⁴⁶ *Opera* (1516), 3: 96r, 104v, 113v, 114r.

¹⁴⁷ Jerome: CSEL 54: 587, CSEL 55: 48, CCSL 79A: 17; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 27v, 1: 89v, 3: 83r.

navigated a small boat on a lake.” The *sacramentum trinitatis* frustrated the third blow administered by the executioner. Here Jerome has in mind the “mystery and sign of the divine threesome (*significatio diuini ternionis*).” The executioner changed tactics by trying to pierce the woman’s throat. If his sword would not cut, at least it could be plunged into her body: *corpori conderetur*. The lemma on the two Latin words introduces Erasmus’ elucidation: “We conceal (*condimus*) what we hide and cover up. A sword thrust into a body is said to be concealed in it.”¹⁴⁸

In his explication of the biblical Hebrew word *teraphim*, Jerome, writing to Marcella (ep. 29), refers to the passage where the messengers of King Saul, ordered to seize David in his bed so that Saul could kill him, reported that they found *cenotaphia* in the bed (1 Samuel 19: 15-16). The Hebrew reads *teraphim*. Erasmus gives the etymology of cenotaph, a compound word made up of two Greek words: κενόν, which means empty, and τάφον, tomb. Thus κενοτάφια are monuments representing a dead person, although his body is absent, as in the case of Achilles’ tomb on the Hellespont.¹⁴⁹

In the letter to Amandus (ep. 55), Jerome argues that when Paul says that the Son is subject to God, we must understand this as Christ being subject to the Father in the faithful since all believers, indeed the entire human race, are members of his body. When we say that humanity (*humanitas*) is subject to divinity we do not mean gentleness (*mansuetudo*) and forbearance (*clementia*), what the Greeks call φιλάνθρωπία, but the entire human race. Erasmus reinforces Jerome’s interpretation: φιλάνθρωπία means kindness and friendly feeling towards human beings. Its antonym is μισάνθρωπία. By *humanitas* theologians sometimes mean human nature and the human race. The Greek equivalent would be ἀνθρωπότης. Erasmus the translator of the New Testament could not resist the opportunity of scoring a point against the Vulgate Bible. He recalls that *humanitas* figures in the Pauline statement at Titus 3: 4 about the appearance of “the kindness and generosity (*benignitas et humanitas*) of God our saviour.” But the Vulgate is wrong to have *humanitas* stand for

¹⁴⁸ Jerome: CSEL 54: 2, 5-6; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 106r, 106v.

¹⁴⁹ Jerome: CSEL 54: 240; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 31v. Where Jerome reads *ecce cenotaphia in lecto*, the Vulgate, referring to an image or idol, reads: *inventum est simulacrum super lectum*.

φιλανθρωπία, which applies to God the Father, who revealed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world.¹⁵⁰

To lend more authority to his pronouncements Erasmus frequently cites his sources. They help him primarily to illustrate idiomatic usage and to supply historical and geographical information. He relied on, among others, Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, the geographers Pomponius Mela and Strabo, the elder Pliny, especially, as we have seen, his *Natural History*, Seneca, Ovid, Statius, Livy, Plutarch, Juvenal, Josephus, Valerius Maximus, Apuleius, Aulus Gellius, Cornelius Celsus the Roman encyclopediast, Servius the commentator on Virgil, Macrobius, Symmachus the Roman orator, Ambrose, Paulus Orosius, Sulpicius Severus, Stephanus the Byzantine grammarian, and Suidas or, more correctly Suda, the name of an encyclopedia, not a person. Most of these authorities appear in the more than twelve folio pages required to print the *scholia* to the consolatory letter to Heliodorus on the death of Nepotian (ep. 60).¹⁵¹ Augustine's *De haeresibus* proved useful, even if Erasmus did not find it reliable in all respects. Erasmus refers to Jerome's *De viris illustribus*, *Hebrew Places*, and exegetical works, such as the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* and the commentaries on Isaiah and Jonah. In at least two places, he invokes Gratian's *Decretum*.¹⁵² Other medieval authorities, such as Isidore of Seville, Peter Lombard, and the thirteenth-century biblical scholar Hugh of St. Cher become targets of Erasmian ridicule.¹⁵³

Renaissance humanists receive credit in the *scholia*. In his second letter to Heliodorus (ep. 60), Jerome distinguishes between a kindness (*officium*) that is more pleasing (*iucundius*) in good times and more agreeable (*gratius*) in bad. In a *scholion* on the two adjectives, Erasmus notes that Lorenzo Valla explains the difference between *iucundus* and *gratus* in Book 4 of his *Elegantiae*. In the *Adversus Helvidium*, Jerome quotes a passage from the Book of Numbers that mentions the sanctuary shekel (18: 16). Anyone who wants to read more about the shekel should consult Guillaume Budé's treatise *De asse*. In the first book of the *Apology against Rufinus*, Jerome disparages the Milesian tales recited by curly-haired boys in schools. By *Milesia* Jerome means

¹⁵⁰ Jerome: CSEL 54: 491; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 61v.

¹⁵¹ *Opera* (1516), 1: 9v-16r.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 1: 3v; 3: 114r.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1516, 1: 5v; 4: 7r, 8v, 10r.

“wanton stories, for example Apuleius’ *Golden Ass*,” about which the “most refined” (*politissimus*) Angelo Poliziano has much more to say in his *Centuria*.¹⁵⁴

The Renaissance scholar to whom Erasmus refers the most is himself. For more detailed discussions about the proverbs that Jerome employs he sends readers to his *Adages*. The *Annotations on the New Testament* supply more information on exegetical questions. To learn more about effecting a return to one’s topic, reflected in the letter to Laeta (107), or about commonplaces, mentioned in the letter to Pammachius on the best way of translating (ep. 57), readers may consult Erasmus’ *De copia*. In the *Enchiridion militis christiani*, he discusses at greater length the soul’s intermediate place between the spirit and the body, a theme suggested by a comment in the letter to Salvina (ep. 79).¹⁵⁵

Erasmus’ research and references indicate two important aspects of his editorial labours. First and most obviously, the *scholia* mediate the authority of his scholarship, which consolidates his proprietary claim upon Jerome’s writings. The references to his own publications constitute the most conspicuous evidence for the need to understand Jerome from an Erasmian perspective. Second, the variety of information substantiates his claim that Jerome was a polymath. The *scholia* reflect his expertise in various disciplines, vaunted by Erasmus in the dedicatory letter to William Warham that preceded the *Vita Hieronymi*.

While making Jerome’s letters easier to understand for his readers, Erasmus encountered difficulties on his own. Like the editor of the Goslar *epistolarium*, he sought to elucidate the passage from the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22): *Praecedit caueas bastarnarum, ordo semiuirorum*. This is how Erasmus read the passage, but in his first edition of Jerome, he keyed a *scholion* to the lemma *Caueas bastarnarum*, not *bastarnarum*, and wrote that *bastarnae* were birds once considered delicacies, such as partridges. In the second edition, he changed his mind without changing the reading of the passage. In the revised *scholion*, he explains that the *Bastarnae* were a barbarian people that lived beyond Germany. They were sold as slaves in Rome. Strabo men-

¹⁵⁴ Jerome: CSEL 54: 566, PL 23: 192C, CCSL 79: 17; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 14v, 3: 6r, 96r.

¹⁵⁵ Jerome: CSEL 55: 292-93, CSEL 54: 507, CSEL 55: 98; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 24v, 3: 169r (*De copia*), 1: 33r (*Enchiridion*).

tions them in Book 7 of his *Geographia*.¹⁵⁶ Vittori in his *scholion* crowed over Erasmus' amazing blunder: *Mirum est, quam hoc in loco Erasmus ineptiat*. After referring to Erasmus' *scholion* in the second edition, Vittori maintained: "But here Jerome speaks of a type of chariot with a wooden vault, in which, as is also presently the case, aristocratic matrons and men were customarily carried about." Servius and Palladius, two fourth-century Roman writers, both attest that a *basterna* is type of vehicle. "We say *basternarum caveae*," the Italian editor continues, "because of the vehicle's raised platform, fashioned and vaulted in the form of a cage (*cavea*)." Today in the vernacular we call it a *cocchia*, a coach.¹⁵⁷ Had Erasmus read Vittori's response, he might have said his critic was either ignorant or deceitful, for in his third edition he finally got it right. At the revised lemma, which still read *Caueas Bastarnarum* in the Parisian edition but changed to *Caueas Basternarum* in the fourth edition, Erasmus holds that by *basternae* Jerome meant "luxurious sedans, in which wealthy matrons were carried about through the city with a troop of eunuchs leading the way." He called them *caveae* because with their latticed design they gave the appearance of cages. Erasmus could not help speculating that, despite the difference in orthography, the etymology of *basternae* was linked to the Bastarnarian tribe.¹⁵⁸

Establishing a correct reading, frequently the object of the *scholia*, often presented Erasmus with challenges. In the dedicatory letter to William Warham, Erasmus points out that "by far the most difficult" editorial challenge was to conjecture from corrupt texts or from "particular fragments and traces of written forms" what an author had originally written, a very difficult task with all authors, but especially so with Jerome's books. A little later in the letter, he lists his first Herculean labour as removing errors and restoring genuine words through the collation of volumes, especially old ones, sometimes making conjectures "from the vestiges of scripts." As in his edition of the New Testament, so too in the edition of Jerome, his professed

¹⁵⁶ *Opera* (1516), 1: 60v (*scholion*), 64r (Jerome's text); *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 1: 140 (Jerome's text), 153 (*scholion*). Isidore Hilberg established the passage as *praeceedit caueas basternarum ordo semiuir* (CSEL 54: 164).

¹⁵⁷ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 314.

¹⁵⁸ *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 1: 54r-54v; *Lucubrationes* (1536-1537), 1: 151.

reluctance to conjecture a reading did not prevent him from divining readings.¹⁵⁹

The edition of Jerome proclaimed that Erasmus had revised Jerome's letters and epistolary books based on a "collation of the most ancient manuscripts," but the manuscripts seemed to afford him more trouble than assistance. He reports not only manuscript readings that diverge from his but also corrupted and conflicting readings. When they agree, his approach is inconsistent. At times, he dares not defy their unanimity, even if an error lurks in their recension as in one passage from the letter to Evangelus (ep. 146) or if a particular passage in Jerome's preface to the Books of Kings makes no sense. The *scholia* give him an opportunity of suggesting superior readings, however.¹⁶⁰ Keying a *scholion* to a specific passage in the letter to Ageruchia (ep. 123), Erasmus proposes an alternate reading "if it were permitted to dissent from the consensus of the manuscripts."¹⁶¹ But he does not incorporate his proposal into the text. The emendations that he recommends against the consensus in two other *scholia* replace the readings that he challenges, however.¹⁶² Erasmus concedes that some readings are not without merit, although he can conjecture superior readings. He was able to reconstruct readings *ex vestigiis exemplarium*—from the evidence of the manuscripts—in the letters to Fabiola on the forty-two stations of the Israelites on their route from Egypt to the Promised Land (ep. 78) and to Marcella on the meaning of the Hebrew words *ephod bad* and *teraphim* (ep. 29).¹⁶³ He restored some missing words from a reply to Damasus' exegetical questions (ep. 36) on the basis of "very old manuscripts."¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Allen 2: 216, 218, ep. 396. For a synthesis of Erasmus' approach to conjecturing New Testament readings, see Jan Krans, *Beyond What is Written: Erasmus and Beza as Conjectural Critics of the New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 183-91.

¹⁶⁰ *Opera* (1516), 3: 150v; *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 3: 6v.

¹⁶¹ In the *scholion* introduced by the lemma *Quarum tibi abundans*, Erasmus believes that *abundans* should read *abunde*, but *abundans* remains in the text. See *Opera* (1516), 1: 40r, 42v. Hilberg reads *abundans*: CSEL 56/1: 83.

¹⁶² Erasmus maintains that *euirat uirum* should read *euiratur* and that in *promissa Sichei*, at the end of a quotation from Virgil (*Aeneid* 4.552), the possessive *Sichei* should be changed to the adjectival *Sicheo* (to modify *cineri*): *Opera* (1516), 1: 39v, 40r (*scholia*), 42r, 43v (text). Hilberg reads *euirat uirum* but prefers the adjectival *Sychaeo* for which he lists *Sicheo*, as well as *Sychaei* or *Sichaei*, as alternate readings: CSEL: 56/1: 80, 88.

¹⁶³ *Opera* (1516), 4: 23v, 31v.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 4: 14r.

The manuscripts at times left Erasmus baffled, however. One passage in Jerome's exposition for Damasus of the exclamation *hosanna* (ep. 20) was so distorted in all the manuscripts that Erasmus could not offer a clear solution.¹⁶⁵ Even though one passage in the letter to Laeta (ep. 107) was almost too corrupt in all the manuscripts for it to be completely reconstituted, nevertheless he tries to shed some light on the problem to facilitate the reader's comprehension. After wrestling with another passage in the same letter, he concludes that it was impossible to restore it completely without the help of corrected manuscripts. Left in the dark, he has provided the reader with some light and supplied the means for making further conjectures. For all its banality he quotes the Virgilian proverb: *Non omnia possumus omnes*. Erasmus admits or protests that he is unable to do everything.¹⁶⁶

Erasmus invested his religious sensibilities, not simply his philological expertise (occasionally limited by poor manuscripts), in his *scholia* on Jerome. Having consoled blind Abigaus, Jerome entrusts to his spiritual care Theodora, the widow of Lucinus (ep. 76). To remain virtuous she must undergo, as it were, a second circumcision. This prompts a clarification from Erasmus. For Christians a second circumcision means "to cut away not only foul but also worldly, bodily, and crass desires."¹⁶⁷

Often Erasmus bends statements by Jerome to a critique of contemporary Christianity. The appropriation of Jerome for this religious agenda begins already in the tenth *scholion* of the edition. The young aspirant to asceticism calls out to Heliodorus, who had abandoned him in the desert: "Recall the day when you became a recruit, when you were buried with Christ in baptism and by the words of the oath of allegiance (*in sacramenti uerba*) you swore for his name's sake to spare neither father nor mother." Erasmus complains that Christians, baptized as children, generally do not remember their baptismal promises unless they add to these some new vow. But what vow could be holier or more devout than the one undertaken at baptism? All protest when a fornicating monk has broken his vow,

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 4: 55v.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 1: 24r, 24v. In the *Adages* (II.iii.94), Erasmus believes that one could hardly find a more banal proverbial saying than the line from Virgil. See ASD II-3: 309.

¹⁶⁷ Jerome: CSEL 55: 36; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 92r.

but no one considers it a tragedy when a layman indulges his lusts and prefers money to Christ in violation of “that most sacred and first vow by which he bound himself in baptism.” We think this is so irrelevant that hardly anyone asks what the baptismal promises mean. In his second edition, Erasmus adds that it would be in the best interests of Christian life if “in a solemn ritual” youths were to renew their baptismal profession and publicly make an account of “the chief points of gospel teaching in its entirety.” Erasmus had already envisioned such a ceremony in 1522 in a preface to his *Paraphrase on Matthew*.¹⁶⁸

On the eve of the Reformation, Erasmus famously predicted a golden age of peace, piety, and learning for Christendom, but he realized “that he was alluding to literary fiction rather than to historical reality.”¹⁶⁹ Christianity was in a bad way. Jerome’s remark to Laeta about the squalor of Rome’s golden Capitol was a commonplace for the demise of paganism and the flourishing of the Christian religion. Yet, Erasmus continues,

we have again lost this glory since the profession of Christianity has been reduced to straits in these times, and among those very people [who profess Christianity] there are very few who are truly Christian. And we threaten war against the Turks, as if in fact it is their habit to become Christians by dint of the sword when we ourselves play the Turk in our hearts.¹⁷⁰

Jerome espoused a view of Christian decline in his *Life of Malchus*. In the prologue, he announces his intention to write a history of the Church “from the coming of the Saviour until our era, that is, from the apostles until the dregs of our time.” “Crowned by martyrs” it grew in the face of persecution, but later under Christian rulers it increased in wealth and power but diminished in virtue. Erasmus calls Jerome to witness: “What would you say, Jerome, if you now saw the Church nearly overwhelmed by so many kingdoms, so much wealth, so many wars, so many treaties?”¹⁷¹ In his *scholia* on the *Adversus Jovinianum*, he warns of a recrudescence of paganism. At the

¹⁶⁸ Jerome: CSEL 54: 46; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 2v-3r; 1524-1526, 1: 5; LB 7: **3v.

¹⁶⁹ István Bejczy, *Erasmus and the Middle Ages: The Historical Consciousness of a Christian Humanist* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 105.

¹⁷⁰ Jerome: CSEL 55: 291; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 24r.

¹⁷¹ Jerome: PL 23: 53B; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 116r.

end of the polemic, Jerome alerts readers: "Beware of the name of Jovinian because it is derived from an idol." Erasmus explains that Jovinian is derived from Jove. The Roman Capitol was sacred to Jupiter; hence one speaks of the Capitoline Jupiter, and Jerome goes on to say: "The Capitol lies in squalor." Although the Romans now do not know where "that admirable Capitol" stood, nevertheless, Erasmus claims, some still dream of "that pagan glory, as if Christ himself had too little splendor." The scholiast assigns much of the blame for "this evil" to the clergy, for, not content with their own station, they seek greatness in the way that pagan princes did of old and not rather in "apostolic treasures."¹⁷²

Greed was one vice that tarnished Christians. Jerome in his eulogy of Paula (ep. 108) relates that she set sail with bishops returning to their churches when winter was over and the sea was open. This reminded Erasmus that during the winter months the ancients avoided travel by sea, as Hesiod instructs (*Works and Days* 618-640). He remonstrates: "Now even in the middle of winter the pursuit of profit draws Christians through all the seas."¹⁷³ When Jerome recalls in the letter to Anthony (ep. 12) that the apostles Peter and James, both fishermen, were sent out "also against the sophists of their day and the wise of the world," Erasmus explains that by sophists Jerome meant "professors of wisdom." "But now," he grumbles, "we gladly embrace riches and power just as much as a more than worldly wisdom, even though Christ loves to be undefiled by every association with the world (*ab omni contagio mundi*)."¹⁷⁴ Interpreting in his reply to Hedibia (ep. 120) Jesus' statement, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mark 10: 25), Jerome insists that the rich must contend not so much with a difficulty but an impossibility. Erasmus supplements this interpretation by specifying what Christ meant by a rich man. Christ is thinking not simply of someone who possesses wealth but of anyone "who admires and loves it as a thing of great importance." No prince, no bishop, no judge will be good

¹⁷² Jerome: PL 23: 338A; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 45v.

¹⁷³ Jerome: CSEL 55: 311; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 76v.

¹⁷⁴ Erasmus reads: *Contra sophistas quoque saeculi & sapientes mundi Petrus & Iacobus piscatores mittuntur*. See *Opera* (1516), 1: 99r. For the *scholion* on *Contra sophistas*, see *ibid*. Hilberg prefers: *contra sophistas quoque saeculi et sapientes mundi Petrus et Iacobus piscator mittitur*. See CSEL 54: 42.

if he marvels at riches—far be this from the good Christian.¹⁷⁵ Unfortunately, although, as Jerome tells Fabiola, a priest's words should correspond to his knowledge and learning, "the common run of priests," observed by Erasmus, says nothing except when it comes to collecting tithes. Jerome's comment that the Jewish priests could have no physical deformities, which were all related to "vices of the soul," elicits a short lecture by Erasmus on the quality of the clergy. He begins: "Not even now is anyone admitted to the priesthood who is burdened with a conspicuous physical defect, unless he makes a cash payment to a bishop." Even worse, those who have spiritual defects—drunkards, womanizers, gamblers—and who sport their vices on their faces, in their grooming, and in their gait everywhere are allowed to become priests. Without disrespect to canon law, Erasmus insists that a reprehensible life brings more dishonour to the priesthood than physical defects. He proposes that anyone with some deformity should not be accepted as a candidate for the priesthood if he pays a required amount of money. This vice "does not eradicate but fosters the avarice of bishops."¹⁷⁶

In a *scholion* on the letter to Paulinus (ep. 58), Erasmus finds fault with the inordinate and vitiated enthusiasm for pilgrimages. Living in Palestine, "Blessed Hilarion," Jerome recounts, "saw Jerusalem in just one day so as not to show disrespect for the holy places on account of his residing nearby and, on the other hand, so as not to seem to confine God to a place." "Today," Erasmus objects, many people, even those who appear to be intelligent, hurry to the holy places. Coming from the farthest corners of the world and travelling at the greatest expense and at supreme risk to their lives and sometimes morals, they leave wife and children behind at home. A pilgrimage is especially attractive when all traces of Christian life are either completely abolished or are shown to be false and doubtful.

¹⁷⁵ Jerome: CSEL 55: 476; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 69v. I have translated the passage from Mark according to Erasmus' reading: *Facilius est camelum per foramen acus transire, quam diuitem intrare in regnum dei*. See *Opera* (1516), 4: 63r. Hilberg reads: *facilius camelus per foramen acus transire poterit quam diues in regna caelorum*.

¹⁷⁶ Jerome: CSEL 54: 614-15, 589-90; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 28r, 27v. Erasmus attributes the ecclesiastical regulation to a constitution of Pope Anastasius I, but this must be a mistake. Perhaps he confused this pope with Pope Gelasius I from whom two canons are taken that include physical defects as impediments to priestly ordination. See Gratian's *Decretum*, D. 36 c. 1, D. 50, c. 59. I am indebted to Lynda Robitaille for this reference.

It is a suprising characteristic of religion that the Roman pontiffs reluctantly release anyone from the pilgrim's vow, when many travel in such a way that they would be more pious if they had not left at all. Otherwise, if it were an act of piety to visit Jerusalem, Hilarion was insufficiently pious for going only once, and that not for the sake of religion but in order not to despise the holy places.¹⁷⁷

Erasmus criticizes the papacy elsewhere in his *scholia*. He not only appreciates the pleasant antithesis of Jerome's description in the letter to Demetrias (ep. 130) of Pope Anastasius I as "a man of the richest poverty;" he uses it for his own devices. Anastasius "was most poor in wealth, but rich in learning. Now it often happens that the Roman pontiffs are fabulously wealthy when it comes to their treasury but are completely deprived of apostolic treasures, namely sacred teaching and piety."¹⁷⁸

Might the infamous Julius II have been such a pope? Erasmus saw him process in splendid triumph into Bologna after it capitulated to the warrior pope in 1506. A decade later, in a note on Acts 5: 15 in the *Annotations on the New Testament*, after contrasting worldly comforts with "Christ's poverty and humility," he remembered: "I myself watched first in Bologna, then in Rome, Julius the Roman pontiff, the second of that name, conducting most magnificent triumphs and, moreover, precisely of the kind that could be compared with the triumphs of Pompey or Caesar."¹⁷⁹ While scholars still debate whether or not Erasmus wrote the anonymous dialogue, *Julius Excluded from Heaven*,¹⁸⁰ the contempt he expresses for the pope in a *scholion* on Jerome's second letter to Damasus (ep. 16) is indisputably his. Jerome implores a decision about the Antiochene schism with wishes that Damasus might sit in judgment with the twelve apostles, that another might as with Peter gird him as an old man, that he like Paul might become a citizen of heaven. This means that Jerome is wishing for Damasus' martyrdom, Erasmus writes. He wonders: "What if some-

¹⁷⁷ Jerome: CSEL 54: 531; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 45v-46r.

¹⁷⁸ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 196; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 28r.

¹⁷⁹ Roland Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), 81; ASD VI-6: 222. In an amplification of 1519 to his note on Acts 5: 15, Erasmus made clear that Julius II was the Roman pontiff.

¹⁸⁰ Jan van Herwaarden, "Erasmus in the World: Appearance and Reality," in Herwaarden, *Between Saint James and Erasmus, Studies in Late-Medieval Religious Life: Devotion and Pilgrimage in the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 578-81.

one had implored Julius II in the same way? What would he have obtained? Torture, I think.”¹⁸¹

Other *scholia* obliquely criticize papal power. Jerome remembers in the course of relating the events of Paula’s life (ep. 108) that “imperial letters” had brought together eastern and western bishops “on account of particular disagreements among the churches.” How surprising it was, Erasmus comments,

that in Jerome’s day the authority of the emperors was still so great in Rome that by their letters, and not rather by those of the Roman pontiff, were eastern and western bishops brought together, especially since, if the rumour is true, Constantine had already handed over power to Sylvester. But in some other letter [Jerome] declared that all bishops were equal among themselves.

The “rumour” was of course not true; Lorenzo Valla had shown that the famous Donation of Constantine, in which the emperor put his power at the disposal of Pope Sylvester I (314-335), was a forgery. Interpreting the “other letter,” the letter to Evangelus (ep. 146), Erasmus argues that when Jerome refers to the bishoprics of Rome, Gubbio, Constantinople, Rhegium, Alexandria, and Tanis, pairing a famous city with one of lesser renown, he infers “that a bishop’s dignity is not to be measured by the size of his jurisdiction but by the merit of his life and that all are equal by virtue of their office.” Jerome tells Innocent that the Roman bishop, “almost caught in the snares of a faction,” overcame his opponents without harming them (ep. 1). Erasmus points out to his reader: “You see that among the ancients he was not called supreme, but Roman.”¹⁸²

What would Jerome have said if he surveyed the religious landscape of early sixteenth-century Christendom with Erasmus’ eyes, or with his own? He might have recognized the dregs of Erasmus’ times. What would he have said if he consulted Erasmus’ edition, noticing *scholia* that took his statements as pretexts for criticizing the state of Christianity? The edition’s *Vita Hieronymi* would not have prepared him for the appropriation—or expropriation, some might think—of his works for the ends of an Erasmian religious agenda. In the biography, Erasmus is more interested in giving his readers a Jerome

¹⁸¹ Jerome: CSEL 54: 69; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 61r.

¹⁸² Jerome: CSEL 55: 310, CSEL 56/1: 310, CSEL 54: 9; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 76v, 3: 150v, 1: 106v.

who represents the best of their common spiritual and theological inheritance, not the scourge of their egregious spiritual shortcomings.

The *scholia*, however, corroborate the casting of Jerome in the *Vita* as the foil of scholastic theology. Jerome's rhetorical theology is at odds with the inane curiosity and contempt for eloquence of the schoolmen. When Jerome writes that reading Rufinus is like reading Heraclitus, Erasmus explains that "Heraclitus was deliberately obscure in his books." Scotinus, his soubriquet, meant full of darkness. After giving Socrates' opinion that one needed a Delian swimmer to understand his books (recorded in Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of the Philosophers* 2.22), Erasmus exclaims in exasperation: "But, O good God, what if Jerome listened to some of today's theologians orating and serving up that bottomless wisdom of theirs with unnatural figures of speech!" More Hieronymian criticism of Rufinus' style gives rise to another Erasmusian outburst:

But if Jerome takes so much offence at defects of this kind of discourse, defects that could be duly defended, what would he do when reading our homegrown theologians whose entire manner of speaking is unnaturally filthy? And if he clamours that he had to work harder to understand Rufinus' speech (which in many places also seems eloquent) than to compose his reply, what if he had to deal with the Occamists or Scotists or others like them? And if in other matters he wants Rufinus' prudence to be evaluated against his absurd speech, how much will he ascribe to these theologians when nothing could be more absurd than their speech? But they are a long way from sharing Jerome's opinion, for they think that for something to be holy or learned it must also be outlandishly barbarous.¹⁸³

Jovinian's writings are so barbaric and his style disordered "with so many of the most filthy defects" that Jerome cannot understand what he says or tries to prove. Erasmus consequently asks: "Where are those scoundrels (*isti*) who think it is holy and Christian to speak like a yokel? With what reproaches does Jerome attack this man's lack of eloquence? But what would he have said if he had listened to those sophistical theologians, compared to whom Jovinian could seem like Messalla?"¹⁸⁴ Scholastic theologians were not as eloquent as this Roman orator or as Jerome's correspondent Paulinus of Nola. In a

¹⁸³ Jerome: CCSL 79: 31, 48; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 96v, 104v.

¹⁸⁴ Jerome: PL 23: 211A; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 24v.

scholion on Jerome's second letter to Paulinus (ep. 58), Erasmus demands: "Let those barbarous, stammering, and dumb theologians read these things—how much the most holy man also praises eloquence in a monk, and Ciceronian eloquence at that."¹⁸⁵

Erasmus shifts his attack from style to substance in his commentary on the letter to Ctesiphon (ep. 133). His inspiration is Jerome's quotation from what "one of our own (*quidam nostrorum*) beautifully says: 'Philosophers are the fathers of heretics.'" Erasmus notes that by *quidam nostrorum* Jerome means a Christian and believes that perhaps Cyprian or Tertullian made the remark. The quotation is in fact from Tertullian's *Adversus Hermogenem*. It means, Erasmus explains,

that all heresies originate from the writings of philosophers and that the purity of Christian wisdom is not helped but defiled by their teaching. But why do these particular theologians not take Jerome to court? For they think that nothing can be understood in Sacred Scripture unless you waste a good part of your life on Aristotle and that it is the height of impudence to preach about Christ before the people unless you have an accurate knowledge of Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. They think that all is ignorance unless you ram the Philosopher down someone's throat one hundred times. They think that Christianity is doomed if anyone rejects the pronouncements of Aristotle. And without what Jerome considers to be the sources of all heresies they do not think the heretics can be refuted. For they will not be able to escape in such a way as to say that this was said by someone else, not by Jerome. Certainly, when they approve of another person's opinion, they make it their own. But I am not saying all of this because I disapprove of the study of Aristotelian philosophy or of any other study at all provided it relates to the humanities, but because I do not want the profane teaching of pagans to be set up as a support for the holy teaching of Christ.

Pagan philosophy, specifically Aristotle, and Christian theology and preaching should not mix. Erasmus repeats this message at the end of the *scholia* on the letter to Ctesiphon. Jerome insists that for many years in various writings he has told his audience the lesson that he learned "publicly in the Church," namely "not to follow the arguments of the philosophers but to find comfort in apostolic simplicity." Preferring their own judgment to that of Jerome, the theologians however do not pay heed to Jerome's ubiquitous execrations against

¹⁸⁵ *Opera* (1516), 1: 46r.

“the arguments of the philosophers in a theologian.”¹⁸⁶ Relishing Jerome’s claim in the *Dialogue against the Luciferians* that the Arian heresy “borrows its streams of proofs from Aristotelian springs,” Erasmus insists: “Read this, theologian, you who rattle on about nothing except Aristotle.”¹⁸⁷

Apart from their rebarbative style and fascination with Aristotle, the penchant of scholastic theologians to ask inane questions also arouses Erasmus’ displeasure. Jerome professes to Hedibia that he will write in reply to her questions not “in the learned words of human wisdom, which God will destroy, but in the words of faith, comparing spiritual things with the spiritual (cf. 1 Corinthians 2: 13) so that the abyss of the Old Testament may call upon the abyss of the Gospel in the voice of the cataracts.” Erasmus points out that with the references to the abyss Jerome is using Psalm 42 allegorically and that “in passing he indicates where theological knowledge should be situated—not in curious and ambitious questions, or rather in quarrels, but in the knowledge of both Testaments, in which Jerome was wonderfully adept.”¹⁸⁸ In the *De viris illustribus*, Jerome records that Bishop Theophilus of Caesarea in Palestine wrote a synodal letter with other bishops against those who “with the Jews observed Easter (*Pascha*) on the fourteenth day of the month.” In a *scholion*, Erasmus adds that Theophilus also refrained from turning the day on which Easter should fall into an “opportunity for strife.” These are the sort of questions that, according to Paul, result only in “conflict and impiety” (cf. 1 Timothy 6: 4, 2 Timothy 2: 23, Titus 3: 9). “We fight,” Erasmus continues, “over trifles of this sort: contingencies, the conception of the Blessed Virgin, the day of Easter.” When it comes to “the most insane wars in which for so many years all things sacred and profane have been confused,” the theologians and preachers say nothing. Yet these wars constitute “the plague of Christendom, the ocean of all evils, the source of barbaric tyranny.”¹⁸⁹

Erasmus refers to himself as a theologian while commenting on Jerome’s preface to *Chronicles* addressed to Domnio and Roga-

¹⁸⁶ Tertullian: CCSL 1: 404; Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 243, 259; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 117v, 118r.

¹⁸⁷ Jerome: CSEL 79B: 32; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 67v.

¹⁸⁸ Jerome: CSEL 55: 473; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 4: 69v.

¹⁸⁹ Jerome: Richardson, *Hieronymus, Liber de viris illustribus*; Genadius, *Liber de viris illustribus*, 29; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 139v-140r.

tianus. His *argumentum* begins by observing that “Jerome shows that geography is useful for a knowledge of Sacred Scripture.” In the first *scholion*, Erasmus writes that Jerome was not satisfied with knowing the names of places from the books of geographers unless he had personally visited each place. “But today,” Erasmus admits, “it is enough for many theologians like me if they only know the name of a place. But there are those who sometimes make a place into an animal, so careless is the disdain for this task.”¹⁹⁰

In other respects, the *scholia* are conventionally Erasmian, in line with the *Vita Hieronymi*. Erasmus regularly refers to Jerome as a saint. He repeatedly stops to admire Jerome’s eloquence. How appropriately (*apte*), elegantly (*eleganter*), pleasantly (*festiviter*), beautifully (*pulchre*), and wonderfully (*mire*) does the Church Father express himself. Erasmus reviews the letter to Heliodorus (ep. 14), the first installment of the edition, with two sets of *scholia*. The second series forms an *artis annotatio*, a commentary on Jerome’s rhetorical skill. The letter is in the form of an exhortation, similar to but distinct from persuasion. Pamphlets (*libelli*) such as this one are “nothing other than Christian declamations.”¹⁹¹ Eloquence serves Christian purposes.

Jerome’s vision or dream will not deter Erasmus. In a lengthy *scholion* on the letter to Eustochium (ep. 22), he complains that all those who have never read a word of Jerome know the story by heart. They say that Jerome was flogged for reading Cicero. With amazing devotion they stay away from the humanities so as not to chance upon a word of Cicero and thus with Jerome earn a beating. Their most foul speech supposedly makes them more like the apostles. But arguing with Rufinus, St. Jerome calls it a dream, even if he denies this to Eustochium. Furthermore, he never thought that Cicero should not be read. We should read him in such a way that

we understand divine matters more correctly and treat them more appropriately. Otherwise, what does he mean when he writes to Magnus the orator? But those wretches (*isti*), while they fritter away a lifetime on sophistical nonsense and the most worthless contests over little

¹⁹⁰ *Opera* (1516), 4: 8v, 9r.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 1: 3v-4r.

questions, pride themselves on not having touched a single good author.

Pope Leo X properly stipulated that no one should study rhetoric or poetry for more than five years at a university without having some experience of literature of the sounder sort. What he laid down for the study of poetry applies also to philosophy. We can blame those who attack more refined literature for the corrupt state of the writings of superior authors. These sacrilegious fellows call any holy man a poet for not writing *quaestiones* in the Scotist style—as if Paul, or the prophets, or any of the ancient theologians who truly lived and breathed Christ wrote this way. Not even Aristotle himself, an immoral and wealthy pagan and “the father of subtleties,” ever wrote such sophistical nonsense as those who call themselves doctors of divinity.¹⁹²

The defence of the humanities and of Cicero as an aid for theology turns into another tirade against the scholastic theologians. Jerome’s dream becomes a battleground between humanist readers of Jerome who interpret it aright in the wider context of the Church Father’s writings and condescending theological ignoramuses who have never read a line of Jerome. The dream does not disqualify a humanist rhetorical theology; it certainly does not justify scholastic theology. Poets may still be theologians.

Jerome’s tremendous value as an ally for Renaissance humanism and humanist theology does not exempt him from criticism in Erasmus’ *scholia*. Erasmus can acclaim Jerome as “the greatest of men” while acknowledging that “in some ways he was nevertheless human.”¹⁹³ Forgetfulness is a human failing of which Jerome was not innocent. Erasmus suspects in the first instance that lapses of memory explain Jerome’s misquotations but also does not rule out problems beyond Jerome’s control in the transmission of his sources.¹⁹⁴ Lexical ignorance and imprudence constitute two other failings that Erasmus identifies, albeit in isolated cases. In one place, Jerome believes there is no difference between a Greek word and a Latin equivalent; in another, Erasmus wonders whether an imprudent or

¹⁹² Ibid., 1: 61v.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 3: 118r.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 1: 28r, 3: 89r; *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 3: 46v.

at least inadvertent use of a Greek figure of speech lies behind one of Jerome's statements.¹⁹⁵

Why in the *De viris illustribus* does Jerome write that he would not enroll the younger Seneca "in the catalogue of the saints"? When he is not afraid to include in his catalogue of writers "Philo, a Jew and not a Christian, and also Josephus, as well as some heretics, why does he evoke the catalogue of the saints? Or why should he be afraid of adding Seneca, a pagan to be sure, but when it comes to morals a person holier than many Christians?"¹⁹⁶

In the preface to his edition of Seneca, first printed in 1515, Erasmus interpreted Jerome's entry for Seneca only in a positive light. Jerome valued Seneca so much that of all the pagans he included only him in the *De viris illustribus*, for he judged that he alone as a non-Christian was worthy to be read by Christians. Erasmus believed that nothing could be holier than his precepts. He encouraged the pursuit of virtue with such passion that one has the impression that he actually put his teachings into effect. Despite the criticisms of his style, he possessed so much piety (*sanctimonia*) that even if he were completely devoid of eloquence, all who made the good life their aim still ought to read him.¹⁹⁷

Erasmus' esteem for this famous Roman Stoic philosopher may explain his reaction to Jerome's critique of Stoicism in the letter to Ctesiphon on Pelagianism (ep. 133). Jerome interprets the claim to be God's equal as a compendium of "the poison of all heretics" that originates with "the philosophers and especially with Pythagoras and Zeno, the first of the Stoics." The Stoics taught that human beings were capable of eradicating their passions, such as grief and joy, hope and fear, and that they could banish vice through meditation and the diligent practice of virtue. But this is tantamount to divorcing human beings from their humanity. Astounded, Erasmus asks why "Jerome is so unfair to this paradox of the Stoics than which nothing could be more Christian if one interprets it correctly." If one does not attain it, presumably divinity, it nevertheless represents the best thing for which one can strive. "It is for a Christian," Erasmus maintains, "to be transformed from a human being into God as much as

¹⁹⁵ *Opera* (1516), 3: 117v, 150r.

¹⁹⁶ Jerome: Richardson, *Hieronymus, Liber de viris inlustribus*; Gennadius, *Liber de viris inlustribus*, 15; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 138v.

¹⁹⁷ Allen 2: 53-54, ep. 325.

this is possible. This is not a mark of conceit but of piety.” In a later *scholion*, he objects to Jerome’s argument that human beings will always sin: “For heaven’s sake, why this opposition to the Stoics? For it does not follow from these remarks that all will always sin, if ever they have been found out to be sinners.”¹⁹⁸ The inconsistency in the *scholia* on the letter to Ctesiphon is striking. Erasmus comes to the defence of the Stoics as amenable to Christianity, but, appreciating the view that philosophy generates heresy, he demands that pagan teaching must be kept far removed from Christian theology. Aristotle was as much a pagan as the Stoics.

Erasmus notices when Jerome bends or twists an argument, an authority, or a word. He applies the verb *torquere* to describe Jerome’s method. We can interpret *torquere* as variously connoting a misrepresentation, a manipulation, or a distortion of meaning. Not all manipulation is reprehensible. In the *Adversus Jovinianum*, Jerome “marvelously manipulates” (*mire torquet*) a passage from Horace, changing what at first seems an instance of jesting self-deprecation into a criticism of others.¹⁹⁹ Yet in the same treatise, he twists several biblical passages to his advantage. Erasmus usually attenuates his criticism with the adverb *nonnihil*: Jerome somewhat misrepresents the Scriptures when extolling virginity at the expense of marriage.²⁰⁰ The scholiast challenges Jerome’s etymology of “celibates” (*coelibes*). They are called this “because they are supposedly worthy of heaven (*coeli digni*), for they abstain from sexual intercourse.” In the first edition, Erasmus replies that they are called celibates “not who live chastely but who lack wives. But Jerome twists this too somewhat, for he wants a celibate to seem also to have a heavenly calling.” In the fourth edition, he expanded the *scholion*. He opposes the view of theologians who understand celibacy in terms of chastity with Quintilian and Horace who merely conceptualize a celibate as someone who is not married. The Roman jurist Gaius may have associated *coelibes* with *coelites*, but these heavenly beings were neither unmarried nor chaste. They indulged in adultery, debauchery, and love affairs with boys. Gaius and Modestus, another jurist, thought that *coelibes*,

¹⁹⁸ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 242, 243; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 117v.

¹⁹⁹ *Opera* (1516), 3: 45r.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 3: 27v-28r. For a detailed analysis, see Hilmar M. Pabel, “Reading Jerome in the Renaissance: Erasmus’ Reception of the *Adversus Jovinianum*,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 55 (2002): 486-88.

like the gods, lived in sweet tranquillity. Thus we have the proverb: *Qui non litigat, coelebs est*—"He who does not quarrel is an unmarried man."²⁰¹ In the *Adages* (IV.ii.35), Erasmus gives Jerome credit for citing this statement proverbially—which Jerome in fact quotes from "the sublime orator Varius Geminus"—an adage that holds that "every marriage is contentious and is not a peaceful life."²⁰²

When in the letter to Marcella on Montanism (ep. 41) Jerome refers almost parenthetically to the apostle Peter as the one "upon whom the Lord founded the Church," Erasmus registers his disagreement:

In the present circumstances, he twists (*detorquet*) this to the praise of Peter. For Peter is not the foundation of the Church, since Paul says: "No one can lay any foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 3: 11). For what is said in the Gospel—"Upon this rock I shall establish (*fundabo*) my Church" (cf. Matthew 16: 18)—without detriment to the judgment of others I understand as "upon that confession concerning me, which Peter, inspired by the Father, pronounced: 'You are the Christ, the son of the living God' (Matthew 16: 16), through which Peter was firm and not a reed tossed about by the winds of the opinions of the masses." For Bede thinks what the Lord said here to Peter applies to all the apostles, especially since in enjoining upon them later the same apostolic responsibility—"Receive the Holy Spirit, whose [sins] you remit etc." (John 20: 22-23)—he equally enjoins it upon all.²⁰³

Given that Augustine in Sermon 76 understands the rock of Matthew 16: 18 to be Christ, not Peter, Erasmus in the *Annotations on the New Testament* is amazed that some exegetes wrench this passage in favour of the pope: *Proinde miror esse, qui locum hunc detorqueant ad Romanum pontificem*. He seems to engage in some bending of his own when in an expansion in 1519 of the note on the Matthean logion he tries to

²⁰¹ *Opera* (1516), 3: 45v; *Lucubrationes* (1536-1537), 2: 100.

²⁰² Jerome: PL 23: 249C; Erasmus: ASD II-7: 114.

²⁰³ Jerome: CSEL 54: 312; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 58v-59r. In John 20: 23, Jesus gives the apostles authority to forgive or retain sins. In his *Exposition of Matthew's Gospel*, Bede connects the Johannine passage to Jesus' bestowal upon Peter of the power to bind and loose, a power that "without a doubt is given to the apostles" in John. Like Erasmus, Bede does not interpret the rock upon which Jesus will build the Church as Peter but as the saviour whom he confessed. See PL 92: 78D-79A. Erasmus predicates the verb *fundare* of Jesus in the *scholion*, even though in his New Testament, in harmony with the Vulgate, he used the verb *aedificare*, to build: *Et super hanc petram aedificabo meam Ecclesiam*. See LB 6: 88B.

excuse Cyprian for his view that Jesus had founded the Church on Peter by proposing to interpret Peter not as an individual but as a symbol and concludes: "Thus hard-as-rock Peter (*Petrus saxeus*) represents the firm faith of the Church." In an interpolation of 1527, he seeks to excuse Jerome too for seeming "to say in his letters that Christ's Church was founded upon Peter." Since the statement about the symbolic value of *Petrus saxeus* immediately follows the reference to Jerome, the reason for excusing him is the same as for Cyprian.²⁰⁴ Erasmus was not as exculpatory in the *scholion*, which shows us how sensitive a reader he could be. A comment made in passing provokes a rebuttal from an editor and exegete who would not permit Matthew 16: 18 to serve as a proof text for papal primacy within the Church.

Vittori was also a sensitive reader, sensitive especially to Erasmus' errors. He pounces on Erasmus' *scholion* in a *scholion* of his own on the letter to Marcella (ep. 41):

With many words Erasmus contends that the Church was founded not upon Peter but upon Christ, and he asserts that those words 'upon this rock' ought to be understood not as 'upon Peter' but upon his confession of Christ. Surely here, as he likes to do, the distinguished interpreter (*egregius interpres*) of Jerome has inverted his meaning. For who denies that the Church was founded upon Christ? Jerome acknowledged this when he previously said that the teaching of Rome flowed from Peter and that teaching was founded upon the rock, Christ.

Vittori may have been thinking of a passage near the end of the *Adversus Jovinianum* where Jerome, assailing Jovinian's teaching, writes: "Surely there was no other province in the whole world that might welcome the proclamation of pleasure, into which the winding serpent might creep, except for the one that Peter's teaching had established on the rock, Christ." Jerome also conceived of Christ as the foundation of the Church in his scriptural commentaries. Peter, however, was a "second foundation after Christ," Vittori explains. Owing to his confession of faith, "the edifice of the Church was placed on him." Showing the difference between the two foundations, Christ said: "I shall build" not "I shall establish my Church," for Peter was established upon Christ. To say that "upon this rock" means "upon

²⁰⁴ Augustine: PL 38: 479; Erasmus: ASD VI-5: 248.

that confession concerning me” is a “ridiculous explanation if it thus excludes Peter himself, who made the confession.”²⁰⁵

The title *egregius interpres* is a sarcastic one. Erasmus’ inversion of Jerome’s meaning and his “ridiculous explanation” make this clear. Vittori’s vituperative sarcasm manifests itself in other ways. With “shameless effrontery” does Erasmus, “that illustrious Dutch interpreter” (*praeclarus ille interpres Hollandus*) offer guesses on whatever subject strikes his fancy. The Batavian *emendator* is far from correct when he reads *cingere*, to gird, instead of *scindere*, to cut, in a sentence from Jerome’s letter to Marcella on Blesilla’s illness (ep. 38). He clearly also does not deserve to be called “that perceptive Batavian editor” (*oculatus ille Batauis interpres*) when it is rare to encounter even the briefest of Jerome’s letters in which Erasmus does not fall into some “heinous error.” When the *ueterator interpres Hollandus* says that the last two Johannine epistles in the New Testament are not the work of John the evangelist, Vittori could be referring to Erasmus’ advanced age, skill, or cunning. He could be the “veteran Dutch editor” or the “crafty Dutch editor.” Perhaps the Italian editor deliberately chose a polysemous word.²⁰⁶ Whether one translates *oscitans* as yawning, drowsy, lazy, or negligent, its application to Erasmus is patently pejorative. To call him an *immutator*, a tamperer, is also to denigrate his reputation as an editor.²⁰⁷ Here and there Vittori contents himself with *Hollandus interpres* or *Batauis interpres* and at least once with the “Dutch scholiast” (*Hollandus scholiastes*).²⁰⁸ The constant identification of Erasmus with his Netherlandish roots has the effect of an ethnic slur. As we saw in Chapter 1, Johannes Molanus thought it best to expurgate the, in his opinion offensive, ethnic references to Erasmus in Vittori’s edition.

Besides despising Erasmus’ origins, Vittori must also have envied his enduring scholarly reputation. He begins his commentary on the letter to the priest Rufinus (ep. 74), not Jerome’s famous adversary,

²⁰⁵ Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 359; Jerome’s statement in the *Adversus Jovinianum*: PL 23: 335B. For references to Jerome’s scriptural commentaries, see Yvon Bodin, *Saint Jérôme et l’Église* (Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1966), 160-61.

²⁰⁶ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 311, 325, 327.

²⁰⁷ For examples of *oscitans*, see *ibid.*, 3: 313, 445; for examples of *immutator*, see *ibid.*, 3: 311, 312, 317, 320, 324, 326, 332.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 3: 428.

on Solomon's famous judgment about the disputed maternity of an infant (1 Kings 3: 16-28):

It is amazing that one cannot come upon even a very slight letter that has not been disfigured with mistakes by Erasman correction. And yet there is no shortage of people who still admire the man and raise him all the way up to heaven with loud praises and eulogies. Such is the misfortune and neglect, rather than the ignorance, of this age.

These remarks preface, in Vittori's opinion, an incorrect reading of Jerome's quotation of 1 Corinthians 10: 11. Basing himself on the Greek text and "the corrected manuscripts of Jerome," Vittori insists that all the things that happened to the Israelites in the desert were written down "for our correction" (*ad nostram correptionem*), not "concerning us" (*de nobis*) as in Erasmus' reading. Erasmus held that Jerome was rendering the idea, rather than the words, of Paul. The Italian editor would not be pleased to discover that the modern critical edition of Jerome's letters upholds Erasmus' reading.²⁰⁹

Erasmus' incorrect, or supposedly incorrect, readings provoked the most criticism from Vittori in his *scholia*. On occasion, as in his *scholia* on the letters to Celantia (ep. 148) and Marcella in praise of Asella (ep. 24), he limits himself to pointing out different readings in Erasmus' edition.²¹⁰ Elsewhere he often exposes Erasmus' false readings or the corrupt passages that he failed to correct. His conjectures are reprehensible. Vittori would have spared Erasmus, "forsaken by the manuscripts," if he had not off the top of his head (*de suo capite*) immediately added an explanation (in a *scholion*) for his reading of a passage from the letter to Evangelus on Melchizedek (ep. 73). Of one passage in the letter to Fabiola on the forty-two stations of the Israelites (ep. 78), Vittori writes: "Erasmus has corrupted the passage from conjectures, as he always does."²¹¹ "With that usual presumption, or rather recklessness, of his" (*ea, qua solet, audacia, uel potius temeritate*) Erasmus insists on readings even when all the manuscripts disagree with him. When the manuscripts disagree with each other, Vittori still attributes an Erasman reading to his *audacia, uel temeritas potius*. Perhaps because he supported clerical marriage too much, he read "wives" (*uxores*) instead of "women" (*mulieres*) in a passage from

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 3: 440-41; Erasmus: *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 3: 26v; CSEL 55: 24.

²¹⁰ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 306-307.

²¹¹ Ibid., 3: 433, 436.

the *Adversus Helvidium*, although the testimony of most manuscripts was against him.²¹²

The *scholia* on the exposition of Psalm 45 for Principia (ep. 65) keep Erasmus constantly under fire. The Batavian editor misreads one passage. Another misreading is the result of the corruption, rather than the correction, of Erasmus. The negligent (*oscitans*) Batavian editor adds in another place words lacking in the manuscripts. Further on, “blind Erasmus” lets stand a “ridiculous reading.” His inability to see anything without biting it as well as his blindness explain two other incorrect readings. A final Erasmian misreading is the result of a “heinous error” on his part. “As you see,” Vittori boasts to the reader at the end of the *scholia*, unable to restrain his penchant for sarcasm, “we have from this one letter alone expunged twenty-seven errors. Go ahead now, and sing Erasmus’ praises (*Erasmio Panegyricum cane*).”²¹³

The Italian editor denounces an Erasmian reading from the letter to Minervius and Alexander (ep. 119) for its heretical implications. From seven codices in Brescia, one of them a printed book, Vittori corrects the passage in question to read: *Residui ergo erunt de credentibus pauci, qui aduentum Domini uideant, secundum id quod Deus uerbum est, nequaquam in uilitate carnis, sed in gloria triumphantis*—“Thus of the believers a few will be left behind so that they might see the coming of the Lord—inasmuch as God is the Word—by no means in the lowliness of the flesh, but in the glory of the triumphant one.” The correction was necessary because Erasmus “had mixed in here an Arian meaning, for he read *secundum id quod Deus uerbum factum est*.” In other words, God is not the Word but became or was made the Word. Vittori continues:

For who else besides Arius ever asserted that the Son of God was made? For he said that Son of God was a creature. Or who besides Erasmus alone was ever able to tolerate the saying that God was made the Word? We indeed read that the Word was made flesh, that is, that it had taken on human nature, but that this very Word was made or created we read nowhere except among the Arians.

Some people are surprised that Vittori has cast out Erasmus from the company of the Church, “although he tarnished a most holy and

²¹² Ibid., 3: 314, 352, 340.

²¹³ Ibid., 3: 445-46.

especially orthodox man with such a mistake, or he did not purify and, moreover, expurgate what others tarnished.” Vittori surmises that Jerome had originally written *secundum id quod Deus uerbum caro factum est*—“inasmuch as God the Word was made flesh”—“or else he would not have added *nequaquam in uilitate carnis, sed in gloria triumphantis*.” But without the support of manuscripts he was unwilling to change what he found in the Brescian volumes.²¹⁴

Vittori also assails Erasmus’ philological and historical errors. We have already seen how he ridiculed Erasmus’ effort to make sense of *basternae*, a term he finally grasped in his third edition of Jerome. Vittori may not have had access to or did not consult systematically any Erasmusian edition beyond the second one. He refers to the *Frobeniana editio*, but does not indicate which edition this was. The *Gryphiana editio* that he mentions was a re-issue of the second edition, printed by Sebastian Gryphius in Lyon in 1530.²¹⁵ One textual error that Vittori identifies in Jerome’s polemic against John of Jerusalem—*non est deo dignus* instead of *non est eo dignus*—appears only in the 1530 edition, indicating that, at least for this text, Vittori consulted only the *Gryphiana editio*.²¹⁶ Commenting on the letter to Paul of Concordia (ep. 10), Vittori writes that with his “usual presumption” Erasmus thought that the “history of Aurelius Victor” that Jerome wanted Paul to give him was by Pope Victor, the thirteenth pope. But this pope was never called Aurelius. The true Aurelius Victor, Vittori maintains, “wrote a history comprising the persecutions of the Church up until Diocletian.” Erasmus corrected his mistake in the third edition: “Sextus Aurelius Victor recorded the deeds of the emperors from Augustus to Theodosius, and today his work survives in fragments.” Erasmus’ revised *scholion* was more accurate than that of his Italian rival, for the fourth-century Sextus Aurelius Victor did in fact write a history of the Roman emperors from Augustus to Constantius II. After all, Jerome recalled his “history of the persecutors,” not persecutions.²¹⁷ Perhaps Erasmus was not as ignorant of

²¹⁴ Ibid., 3: 455. For Erasmus’ reading, see *Opera* (1516), 4: 88r.

²¹⁵ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 325, 340.

²¹⁶ CCSL 79A: CXXXIX. The passage reads: *Qui diligit patrem et matrem super Christum non est eo dignus*—“He who loves father and mother more than Christ is not worthy of him” (CCSL 79A: 16). For Vittori’s censure, see *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 373.

²¹⁷ Jerome: CSEL 54: 38; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 312-13; Erasmus: *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 1: 48r; *The Oxford Classical*

Roman history as Vittori suggests in a *scholion* on the *Adversus Iovinianum*.²¹⁸

Erasmus' historical mistakes, like his errors in establishing Jerome's texts, could have religious ramifications. Vittori begins a long *scholion*, keyed to the sentence "Italy changed her mourning garments at the return of Eusebius" in the *Dialogue against the Luciferians*, by reporting with embarrassment "how Erasmus blunders here, and how recklessly he voices his opinion (*calculus ferat*) about all matters, as if no historian were still alive." He was not content to say (in a previous *scholion*) that the word 'hypostasis' was an invention of Arius and was therefore rejected by Catholics, although everyone knows that it was part of Catholic vocabulary, employed to signify 'person.' For Erasmus goes on to say (in a subsequent *scholion*) that this Eusebius was the bishop of Nicomedia, making him a Catholic, since he rebaptized Constantius, son of Constantine the Great, whom the Arians had initially baptized. Then Erasmus immediately mentions another Eusebius, this time of Caesarea in Palestine. Vittori exclaims:

The man's charity is wonderful: for one Catholic bishop he substitutes two Arians. For who does not know that Eusebius of Nicomedia and Eusebius of Caesarea were not only Arians but also leaders of the Arians? I do not know what whoever is unaware of this does know of sacred matters.

We might forgive Erasmus' editorial haste for preventing him from consulting histories to determine the identity of this Eusebius and the Arian or Catholic allegiances of those whom he names, but how can one excuse a further folly? If Eusebius were from Nicomedia or Caesarea—in other words, if he were bishop of one of these cities—why should he return to his church in Italy? Passing over the error about the rebaptism of Constantius, Vittori affirms:

I have recalled these things in passing for the sake of helping the Church, not for the sake of persecuting a man, so that readers may realize how much accuracy (*fides*) in sacred matters it is necessary for such an editor to have. For with great presumption, or dare I say

Dictionary, ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (3d ed., Oxford 1996), 222, s. v. "Aurelius Victor, Sextus" by Alexander Hugh McDonald and Antony Spawforth.

²¹⁸ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 347.

recklessness, he always at his convenience turns the Church upside down.

Vittori at last reveals the real Eusebius: the Bishop of Vercelli.²¹⁹

What Vittori apparently did not know was that Erasmus knew this too. He accurately summarized the Erasmian *scholion* as it appeared in the first and second editions.²²⁰ But in the third edition, Erasmus revised his identification of Eusebius: “After the restoration of Athanasius, he was recalled from exile along with Luciferus. He was the Bishop of Vercelli.” If with the earlier *scholion* he upended the Church, Erasmus set it straight again with his correction. He left as it was, however, his comment about the rejection of the word ‘hypostasis’ as Arius’ invention.²²¹

Both Erasmus and Vittori were wrong about the origins of ‘hypostasis.’ The word found its way into philosophical discourse thanks to Stoicism. Before the Council of Chalcedon in 451 defined it as referring to each of the three distinct persons in the Trinity equally sharing the same divine nature, ‘hypostasis’ had several conflicting connotations. In early Arian vocabulary, ‘hypostasis’ signified ‘substance’ (οὐσία), and in response the Council of Nicaea condemned the equivalence of these terms. For the Trinity to have three hypostases meant that it consisted not only of “three distinct realities, but three realities hierarchically graded according to nature or status or both.” The way in which Arians spoke of three hypostases consequently challenged the orthodox Christological doctrine of the Council of Nicaea (325).²²² Jerome exemplified the misgivings about ‘hypostasis’ within orthodox circles. He complained in his first letter to Damasus (ep. 15) that the Campenses, an offshoot of the Arians, demanded that he accept their “new doctrine of the three hypostases” after the decisions of Nicaea and Alexandria. When Jerome professed “three subsistent persons,” his opponents, not content with this interpretation, insisted on the word. Jerome could not help but think that

²¹⁹ Ibid., 3: 366.

²²⁰ *Opera* (1516), 3: 67v; *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 2: 150.

²²¹ *Opera omnia* (1533-1534), 2: 53v.

²²² Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 208-209, 219-20; *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (New York: Garland, 1997), 1: 551-53, 552 (quotation), s. v. “Hypostasis,” by Richard A. Norris.

poison lay hidden in its syllables.²²³ Erasmus was correct, therefore, in saying that the orthodox, at least some of them in the fourth century, rejected the term.

Although Vittori's corrections are for the most part textual, philological, and historical, he can on occasion, as we have already seen, cast aspersions on Erasmus' theological credentials and confessional allegiances. In one place, he describes Erasmus as "never having a good opinion about the true Catholic Church," which for Vittori and Jerome was the Roman Church, never sullied by heresy.²²⁴ No doubt, Vittori's most vociferous censure of Erasmus' heterodoxy arises in a protest against a *scholion* on the eulogy of Fabiola. After a long scriptural excursus inspired by Fabiola's public penance in Rome, Jerome concedes: "This is not the place for me to preach penance and to say, as if I were writing against Montanus and Novatus, 'that sacrifice pleases the Lord' (cf. Romans 12: 1) and 'a spirit crushed is a sacrifice unto God' (Psalm 51: 17)... ." The *scholion* introduced by the lemma *Contra Montanum* opens by pointing out that the two would-be adversaries of Jerome denied that Christians, once baptized, could return to Christ's grace through penance. Erasmus invites his reader to consider that confession of and satisfaction for sins had once been public and that in Jerome's day, it seems, the "secret confession of faults had not yet been instituted," an institution devised later by the Church, wholesome as long as priests and laity used it properly. Some inattentive theologians, however, have mistakenly matched the old form of "public and general confession," which entailed nothing more than an acknowledgement of sins in the form of certain signs and evidence of atonement required by a bishop, with the very different secret kind. Apart from a slight rewording in the second edition of a phrase in the discussion of public and private confession, that discussion remained the same until the fourth and final authorized edition.²²⁵ Vittori retorted:

That most pestilential of all heretics, Erasmus, who at his pleasure either set forth or corrupted everything, and who never passed up the opportunity, whenever he chanced upon it, to pour out poison, here denies that the secret confession of sins existed among the ancients.

²²³ CSEL 54: 64-65.

²²⁴ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 360.

²²⁵ Jerome: CSEL 55: 42; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 89v, *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 1: 204, *Lucubrationes* (1536-1537), 1: 201.

He admits only a public confession, which was exacted for public crimes. And he even cuts the throat of that one, evident by signs only and the imposition of penance, when he insists that it had become customary.

Vittori refers the reader to a book he published in 1562 in which he refuted at length “this heresy about secret confession.” The title page of his treatise advertises that his historical account, taken “from the ancient holy Fathers,” abundantly proves “against the Lutheran heretics that sacramental confession was instituted by Christ himself and that it has been observed in the practice of the Catholic Church right up to our times.”²²⁶

Vittori’s animus against Erasmus exhibits his close reading of the texts that his predecessor had established as well as the accompanying *scholia*, even if he did not read them in their final versions. Did he absorb Erasmus’ method in the *scholia* by reading them? From the preface to Pius IV it is evident that he not only aimed at refuting Erasmus’ *scholia*, so replete with mistakes and ignorance that he still could not believe how Erasmus’ great reputation endured. Vittori also commented on all the passages in Jerome that for any reason presented difficulties, especially from the point of view of history, for Jerome, “most erudite in each and every way,” was full of these difficulties. “And we did this,” Vittori explains, “both since the work seemed necessary to us and so that nothing could be found that seemed more useful in the Erasmian than in our edition.”²²⁷ Vittori thus wanted to rebut and replace the Erasmian *scholia*.

Consequently, Vittori’s *scholia* share much in common with those of Erasmus. The Italian editor, like the *Batavus interpres*, routinely affirms Jerome’s sanctity and draws attention to his elegant style. He identifies classical and scriptural references. As a philologist, he defines uncommon words. His research is at least as good as that of Erasmus, for he delved into a wide array of classical and Christian sources for the geographical and especially historical information that his *scholia* supply. Vittori explains the Hippocratic oath, identifies in a long *scholion* the Greek philosophers Anaxagoras, Crantor, Diogenes, Clitomachus, Carneades, and Posidonius, discusses the sig-

²²⁶ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 323; Mariano Vittori, *De sacramento confessionis, seu paenitentiae, historia* (Rome: Paolo Manuzio, 1562).

²²⁷ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis et libri contra haereticos*, 1: first recto following the title page.

nificance of the Roman historian Quintus Fabius Pictor, and tells the story of Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus. He rejects Erasmus' explanation that the goddess Cybele trembled because of old age. That is not what Festus (the Roman encyclopediast Sextus Festus Pompeius) remembers, Vittori replies, for he attributed her shaking to frenzy.²²⁸

Frequently, Vittori gives alternate or previous readings of passages, sometimes characterizing them as false but without always impugning Erasmus. Given his advertisement in the preface to Pius IV of having painstakingly compared Erasmus' edition with twenty manuscripts from Florence, Brescia, Naples, and Bologna and of benefiting from manuscripts in the Vatican Library, it is not surprising to read in the *scholia* how Vittori based his emendations on manuscript readings. Nevertheless, his vaunted dependence on manuscripts is open to doubt when in Jerome's *Apology against John of Jerusalem* Vittori opts for a reading which supposedly appears in all the manuscripts and printed editions but which, according to J.-L. Feiertag, the modern editor of the text, survives nowhere—nowhere, that is, except in Erasmus!²²⁹

At issue is a passage from the *Apology* in which Jerome gives the Greek equivalent for the Latin term, *ratio seminis*. Erasmus disagreed with one reading of the passage: *Et quomodo tanta arboris magnitudo, truncus, rami, poma, folia non videntur in semine, sunt tamen in ratione seminis, quam Graeci σπερματολογία vocant*—"Even as a tree of such great size and its trunk, branches, fruit, and foliage are not visible in a seed; they are nevertheless in the principle of the seed, which the Greeks call σπερματολογία." In a *scholion* in his first edition of Jerome, he explains that σπείρω means 'seed' and λόγον 'reason.' But Jerome has in mind "that seminal force that has the essence and act of form"—*Sentit autem uim illam seminalem quae formae rationem habet & actus*. To the extent that one may "sniff out the traces of some manuscripts" Erasmus conjectures that Jerome might have written σπινθηρισμὸν since the force of a seed is supposedly like a spark. (The Greek word for spark is σπινθήρ.) Accordingly, in establishing the passage, Erasmus replaced σπερματολογία with σπινθηρισμὸν.²³⁰ In an amplification of the *scholion* in the second edition, he surmises

²²⁸ Ibid., 3: 287, 289, 291, 311.

²²⁹ CCSL 79A: CXXXIX.

²³⁰ *Opera* (1516), 3: 78v (the passage as established by Erasmus), 83r (*scholion*).

that someone, translating the preceding Latin words, inserted *σπερματολογία* in order to fill a lacuna.²³¹ Vittori begins his *scholion* by noting that some suppose that *σπερματολογία* corresponds to the Latin words. Startlingly, he acknowledges that “before us Erasmus correctly recognized that this reading was unsuitable and had been inserted by some ignorant person for the sake of filling a lacuna.” That Vittori should agree with Erasmus was a surprisingly rare event. Since all the manuscripts and printed editions agree on *σπινθηρισμόν*, Vittori refused to change this reading.²³²

Already in his first two *scholia*, Vittori invokes “many manuscripts” or “all the manuscripts that we have.” In the second case, he opposes the manuscripts to the reading of a passage from the letter to Heliodorus (ep. 14) found in the “printed codices.”²³³ Sometimes he locates the manuscripts, appealing, for example, to one manuscript from the Medici as well as a second Florentine manuscript, or to one from the Medici and one from Fiesole and some from Brescia, or to six from Florence and nine from Brescia.²³⁴ Printed editions also provided some assistance. Vittori accredits three printed editions and three manuscripts for one emendation; he reproduces a sensible reading from an unidentified “transalpine edition.”²³⁵ Yet he also points out the mistakes and false readings in the editions of Jerome printed north of the Alps. Even manuscripts were not always reliable. Vittori registers their discordant readings, and in one place he opts not to follow the consensus of seven from Florence and one from Brescia.²³⁶ Reconstituting Jerome’s texts obviously gave Vittori immense pleasure, as his celebration of a “most beautiful emendation,” an improvement upon Erasmus, makes clear.²³⁷ This editorial responsibility could be a painful one, however. It prompts him to complain, as did Erasmus. Vittori is amazed at how hard he had to work to correct a passage from Jerome’s preface to Ezekiel. In

²³¹ *Lucubrationes* (1524-1526), 2: 185.

²³² *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 375. Feiertag (CCSL 79A: 44), who lists the recensions of Erasmus and Vittori as the sole attestations of *σπινθηρισμόν*, agrees with the reading of Jerome’s eighteenth-century editor Domenico Vallarsi: *σπερματικὸν λόγον* (PL 23: 376D).

²³³ *Ibid.*, 3: 283

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 3: 296, 397, 412.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3: 313, 359.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 3: 381.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 3: 313.

emending the *Commentary on Isaiah*, he groans in one place: “This passage tormented me for a long time.”²³⁸

Did some Erasmian *scholia* assist Vittori in elucidating Jerome? Amidst his accusations of Erasmus’ editorial ineptitude, did the *Italus interpres* purloin material from the Batavian’s *scholia* as he plagiarized his *argumenta*? Recall Erasmus’ little lesson about skiffs and *scalmi* in a *scholion* on the letter to Innocent (ep. 1): *Minores cymbae, Scalmi uocantur*—“Smaller boats are called *scalmi*.” The only difference in Vittori’s definition is that he renders it in the singular: *Minor cymba scalmus uocatur*.²³⁹

Jerome takes pleasure in saying that, despite being a centenarian, Paul of Concordia is still in good health. He writes: *tu adolescentiam in aliena aetate mentiris*—“you give the impression of youth in another age.” Let us compare the *scholia* of Erasmus and Vittori:

Erasmus

Mire usus est uerbo mentiris in bonam partem pro imitaris. Id mollius est in rebus, quam in personis. Vt si dicas, impudens loquacitas, mentitur aeloquentiam. Et alienam aetatem uocat, non alterius hominis, sed ut Vergilius, Alienis mensibus aestas, id est non suis: ueluti qui senex amat, aliena aetate amare dicitur.

He wonderfully employs the verb ‘you deceive’ in a good sense instead of ‘you imitate.’ This works more easily with things than with persons. As if you were to say shameful talkativeness simulates eloquence. And he says ‘another age,’ not ‘of another man,’ but like Virgil—“summer in other months,” that is not its own. Just as an old man in love is said to love in another age.

Vittori

Mentiris, dixit, pro imitaris: eleganti locutione. qui enim in senectute adolescentiae uigorem habet, recte mentiri adolescentiam dicitur. alienam autem uocauit aetatem, id est non suam, iuxta illud Virgiliti: Et alienis mensibus aestas. senectus enim aliena ab adolescentia aetas est.

He said ‘you deceive,’ instead of ‘you imitate’ in an elegant turn of phrase. For he who has the strength of youth in old age is rightly said to give the impression of youth. But he said ‘another age,’ that is, not his own, in keeping with Virgil’s saying: “summer also in other months.” For old age differs in time of life from youth.

²³⁸ Ibid., 3: 430; *D. Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia*, 9 vols. (Rome: In aedibus populi Romani, 1571-1576), 6: *Annotationes*, 20.

²³⁹ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 331.

Vittori imitates Erasmus by praising Jerome's use of *mentiris* and by invoking the same passage from Virgil (*Georgics* 2.149) to elucidate what Jerome means by "another age."²⁴⁰

At the end of his letter to Marcella on the death of Lea (ep. 23), Jerome alludes to the sending out of the twelve apostles by Jesus (Mark 6: 7-9 and parallel passages) and advises:

When we run the course of this life, let us not be dressed in two tunics, that is with a double faith; nor let us be encumbered with leather shoes, namely dead works. A purse of wealth should not press us down to the ground. We should not seek the help of a staff, that is, of worldly power.

Both Erasmus and Vittori admired this passage. The former wrote: *Mire totum hunc euangelij locum ad allegoriam trahit*—"He wonderfully diverts this entire gospel passage into an allegory." Vittori expands *mire*, chooses a different adjective to express the totality of the logion, and prefers metaphor to allegory while retaining Erasmus' verb: *omnem hunc Euangelii locum eleganter, appositeque ad metaphoricum sensum trahit*—"He elegantly and appropriately diverts this entire gospel passage into a metaphorical meaning."²⁴¹

Vittori seems to have merely rearranged and rephrased Erasmus' identification of Turpilius, whom Jerome mentions in his letter to Niceas (ep. 8):

Erasmus

Hunc Eusebius testatur fuisse temporibus Pompeij. Quamquam nulla ingenij sui monumenta nobis reliquit, quae quidem extent.

Eusebius testifies that this man lived in the time of Pompey. But no works of his genius that might indeed survive have come down to us.

Vittori

Huius ingenii monumentum nullum extat. comicum autem, & Pompeii fuisse temporibus, Eusebius testis est.

No work of this man's genius survives. But Eusebius testifies that he was a comic poet and lived at the time of Pompey.

²⁴⁰ Jerome: CSEL 54: 36; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 59v; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 312.

²⁴¹ Jerome: CSEL 54: 215-16; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 70r; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 317.

Vittori's only innovation is to add that Turpilius was a *comicus*. *Turpilius comicus* is the *incipit* of Jerome's letter.²⁴²

Vittori, like Erasmus, co-opts Jerome for his own religious agenda. Whereas Erasmus brandished Jerome as a whip with which to chastise faithless Christians and feckless theologians, Vittori calls Jerome to witness to the venerable antiquity of Catholic belief and practice and against heretical innovation. Heresy, not complacency, is the culprit causing the historical deterioration of Christianity. In his lament for the downfall of the "Roman world" in the eulogy of Nepotian (ep. 60), Jerome deplores the destruction of churches, the stabling of horses at the altars of Christ, and the digging up of the relics of the martyrs. Vittori consequently asks: "What would you say, Jerome, if you were alive now?" Neither pagans nor foreign armies were responsible for what had befallen Britain, Germany, and France, but Christians supposedly acting out of Christian devotion. As a result, churches have been devastated, convents of nuns invaded and profaned, altars torn down, the Mass abolished, the relics of the martyrs and saints flung away and set on fire. The perpetrators pride themselves on being "true Christians and, moreover, Catholics, yet they despise others as idolaters."²⁴³ In his letter to Riparius (ep. 109), Jerome acknowledges his correspondent's comment that Vigilantius "again opens his stinking mouth and produces the most filthy stench against the relics of the holy martyrs." Emulating Jerome, Vittori wonders and asserts:

What would the holy man have said, had he lived in this wretched age? For today the innovators have not only opened their stinking mouths against the relics of the martyrs and saints, but they have also laid their hands on them and reduced them to ashes, as King Henry VIII of England, the most ungodly of all, did with the body of Thomas of Canterbury. As I myself saw in England, he scraped away his images from every wall and his name from every book. The wretches certainly are unaware of what has been written: "But I highly esteem your

²⁴² Jerome: CSEL 55: 31; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 97v; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 328.

²⁴³ Jerome: CSEL 54: 571; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 292.

friends, O God” and “He who rejects you, rejects me. But he who rejects me, rejects the one who sent me” (Luke 10: 16).²⁴⁴

Elsewhere Vittori calls these perpetrators, innovators, and wretches “the heretics of our time.” He identifies Calvinists as examples of these heretics in a note on Jerome’s *Commentary on Nahum*, for they have removed Christ from the Eucharist.²⁴⁵

Vittori’s confessionally reconstructed Jerome makes room for a Jerome who lent support to the cause of Catholic reform. In the eulogy of Nepotian, Jerome relates the only time that the deceased was angry with his uncle Heliodorus—when he complained of his inability to bear the responsibility of the priesthood for which, he claimed, he was too young. Vittori claims that this passage teaches bishops to be discriminating about those whom they admit to holy orders. They should choose only worthy men and promote the best of these.²⁴⁶

All of Vittori’s Catholic readers have much to learn from Jerome. The lessons begin already in the first set of *scholia*. Contrary to the jeering of today’s heretics, one can learn from a passage in the first letter to Heliodorus (ep. 14) that Christians were accustomed to making the sign of the cross on their foreheads whenever any danger threatened them. From another passage, “you can learn four things against the heretics of our time”: that bishops and priests are the successors of the apostles, that by their words they confect the Eucharist and add members to the Christian flock through baptism, that they possess the keys to the kingdom of heaven with the accompanying power of loosing and binding before Judgment Day, and that they are celibates who preserve their chastity. Commenting on subsequent letters, Vittori invites readers, among other things, to see how many churches were in communion with the Roman Church, to revere the cross of Christ, to learn how much the Church’s tradition deserves respect, to realize how aptly Jerome describes and praises the life of a monk “opposed to what the heretics bark at today,” to be informed, again “in contrast to the heretics of our

²⁴⁴ Jerome: CSEL 55: 352; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 355. Vittori’s first quotation—*Mihi autem nimis honorati sunt amici tui Deus*—is from the introit to the Mass for the feast of St. Andrew (30 November).

²⁴⁵ *D. Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia* (1571-1576), 6: *Annotationes*, 75.

²⁴⁶ Jerome: CSEL 54: 559; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 290.

time,” of “the most ancient custom of singing psalms in the churches and the practice of night-time prayers,” and to recognize “the holy and most ancient custom of the Church in blessing whatever things that are of human benefit.”²⁴⁷

Reinforcing each other’s orthodoxy, Jerome and the Council of Trent coalesce for the benefit of Vittori’s readers. Jerome asks Vigilantius whether the Bishop of Rome causes harm when “he offers sacrifices to the Lord” upon the bones of Peter and Paul and when “he thinks of their tombs as the altars of Christ.” Vittori chimes in: “Here you clearly hear that the Mass is a sacrifice, as the Council of Trent rightly decreed, and is accustomed to be celebrated upon an altar in which the relics of the martyrs and of the saints have been placed.”²⁴⁸ The Council promulgated its teaching of the sacrifice of the Mass in its twenty-second session on 17 September 1562.²⁴⁹ Vittori recalls that he was present with Cardinal Giovanni Morone at the Council’s twenty-third session (15 July 1563). It taught that bishops were superior to priests. Vittori holds “that it is extremely evident that a priest is subsumed under a bishop” or “subordinate to a bishop,” as Jerome himself is aware at the end of his letter to Evangelus (ep. 146) when he writes: *quia in episcopo et presbyter continetur*.²⁵⁰ It makes no difference that Jerome in his preface to the Old Testament Books of Samuel and Malachi excludes from the biblical canon the Books of Wisdom, Sirach, Judith, Tobias, as well as the *Shepherd of Hermas*. He was thinking of the canon of the Hebrews, not of the canon of the Church, Vittori affirms before referring readers to the fourth session of the Council of Trent. In a decree of 8 April 1546, the Council listed all the books of the Bible.²⁵¹ When Jerome takes no pleasure in the third and fourth Books of Ezra, Vittori observes: “The third and also the fourth Book of Ezra is rejected among the apocryphal writings; consequently, the General Council of Trent says

²⁴⁷ *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 284, 308, 310, 322, 328, 330, 332.

²⁴⁸ Jerome: CCSL 79C: 18; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 358.

²⁴⁹ Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2: 732-36.

²⁵⁰ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 311; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 411; Trent: Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2: 743, 744. Vittori begins his *scholion*: *Sub Episcopo presbyterum contineri, sicut exploratissimum est, ita ab Hieronymo ipso non est ignoratum*.

²⁵¹ Jerome: PL 28: 556A; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 427; Trent: Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2: 663-64.

that only the first and second are canonical.” In his preface to Judith, Jerome recognizes that the Jews consider this book apocryphal but acquiesces in the decision of the Council of Nicaea to count it among the Sacred Scriptures. Vittori comments:

From this passage you can learn that it belongs to the Church to accept or reject books. For many, even though they are not in the Hebrew canon, she has accepted as canonical, such as Tobias and Judith, about which he is now speaking.

The Council of Trent accepted both even if, as Jerome writes, they were not accepted in the canon in his day.²⁵² Vittori cleverly attributes the rejection to Jerome’s age, not to Jerome himself.

For the Italian editor Jerome’s texts frequently become pretexts for assailing and disparaging Protestants. The “heretics of our time” ought to listen to Jerome when they scoff at ecclesiastical ordinations and set themselves up as deacons and preachers of the gospel (*Evangelistae*) without the approval of bishops and the imposition of hands. What is worse, they drive out bishops and in their place content themselves with secular magistrates. Today “the new religion of the *Evangelistae*” consists not of prayer but of drinking and brawling. Jerome so valued the authority of the Roman Church that he promised to embrace whatever seemed erroneous if the Roman pontiff had commanded it. But today the innovators mock and repudiate whatever is holy and Catholic because it comes from the Roman see. Although Jerome frequently defends human free will, the innovators are not ashamed to tear it to shreds. The “heretics of our time” should read Jerome since “they daily open their stinking mouths against the most holy body of Christ and his most sacred blood and twist to their own meaning the clear and, moreover, manifest words of Christ,” turning his body into “some sort of shadow and symbol.” Whereas Erasmus deployed the quip, “philosophers are the fathers of heretics,” to shame scholastic theologians for their dependence on Aristotle, Vittori applies it to heretical innovators. When a Christian follows “the impulse of human reason in the manner of the philosophers, he lets go of faith, which surpasses all reason.” The innovators, by accommodating Scripture to earthly reasoning instead of subject-

²⁵² Jerome: PL 28: 1403B, PL 29: 37D-38A; Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 429. The Council of Nicaea did not list which books belonged to the canon of the Bible.

ing the rational process to Scripture, “deny the body of Christ in the sacrament of the altar and awaken six hundred heresies put to sleep by the Fathers.”²⁵³

Antidoti

Vittori despised Erasmus’ *antidoti*. In response to the one appearing after the third book of Jerome’s *Dialogue against the Pelagians*, he characterized it as

a poisoned drug, served up to the Church, as is his custom, under the name of ‘antidote.’ For he turns Jerome and also all the theologians upside down in order to convict either him or them of ignorance. And when he tries to defend Jerome, he secretly reprimands theologians for their ineptitude. As if amazed why Jerome said or did not say this or that, he stops the reader and, furthermore, once he has caught his attention, he secretly advises what he wishes to be believed or not to be believed.²⁵⁴

Vittori’s characterization captures the polemical dimension of the *antidoti* as well as Erasmus’ struggle to accept some of Jerome’s statements and his determination to understand them aright.

The *antidotus* as a paratextual genre seems in Erasmus to be unique to the edition of Jerome. Erasmus was certainly aware of the word’s medical meaning, which he defines more than once in the *scholia*. An antidote is taken in particular against poisons; it is properly a drug administered to combat harmful substances, especially poisons.²⁵⁵ When after the *scholia* on the letter to Heliodorus (ep. 14), Erasmus first deploys the term, it appears in the title *Antidotus adversus calumniam*. Erasmus administers an antidote against a false claim or accusation or a captious criticism. The polemical nature of the term is obvious in the *antidota*—also used as neuter noun—against the errors of the Lutheran Magdeburg Centuriators and of Martin Chemnitz, the Lutheran critic of the Council of Trent, that Schulting incorporated into the beginning of his *Confessio Hieronymiana*.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Vittori: *Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos*, 3: 330, 331, 361, 397, 449 (misprinted as 494), 396.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 3: 405.

²⁵⁵ *Opera* (1516), 1: 60r, 3: 23v.

²⁵⁶ *Confessio Hieronymiana*, γ3r-δ3r.

As in the *Vita Hieronymi*, Erasmus in the first *antidotus* positions Jerome in the crossfire between Italian humanists too keen on Cicero and scholastic theologians. In his own day, Jerome did not lack for *calumnia* and felt constrained to reply to those whom he called his dogs. Today, Erasmus complains, especially Italians give credence to “the most foolish yarn” attributed to Theodore Gaza, that Jerome, “this so incomparable a man,” was falsely accused of being a Ciceronian. These detractors clearly found more of Christ and of holiness in Jerome’s writings than they wanted. For their part, veterans of thorny disputations and of a contentious theology fasten upon four or five words outside of their literary and temporal contexts and ended up distorting, corrupting, and frequently cavilling at what they do not understand. Consequently, Erasmus adds an *antidotus* to his *scholia* to forearm his readers so that they can read without offence “this truly saintly man.” Of course, Jerome’s writings, approved without exception by the Church, harbour not a hint of poison. Erasmus intends his antidote against the poison of calumny.

When it comes to the youthful playfulness of the letter to Heliodorus (ep. 14), one should not read Jerome as requiring poverty of all Christians. When he exhorts Heliodorus to be without any possessions, he is not demanding of him, a monk, what he did not require of Rusticus the monk. Jerome was indulging in hyperbole. We must attach the condition, “if you wish to be perfect,” to Jerome’s demand for poverty. The evangelical precept of poverty has more to do with interior dispositions than with profits or cash. The best way to abjure wealth is not to strive to accumulate it, not to mourn its loss, not to rejoice in its acquisition, not to attach any value to it. With Paul one must possess it as if not possessing it (cf. 1 Corinthians 7: 30-31). Otherwise, what should we say about the many eminent bishops whose riches rival even those of kings or about other wealthy Christians who are all happy to be called followers of Christ? Can a Christian be anything other than a follower of Christ?²⁵⁷

How should we read Erasmus’ comments about the compatibility between riches and Christian discipleship? Is his effort to extenuate the applicability of Jerome’s ascetic demands a genuine form of accommodation to sixteenth-century Christianity? Or is his goal of

²⁵⁷ *Opera* (1516), 1: 5r. See PL 28: 1082A, where Jerome refers to his opponents as “my dogs” in his preface to Job.

rendering Jerome inoffensive to readers a thinly veiled ruse to attack the pursuit of wealth among Christians, something that Erasmus does overtly in the *scholia*? Or, more perplexingly, does he mean both what he says and what he suggests?

The theme of wealth dominates several *antidoti*. In the letter to Nepotian (ep. 52), Jerome wants the clergy to be poor. Erasmus illustrates with a quotation:

He who possesses the Lord and says with the prophet, "the Lord is my portion," (cf. Psalms 16: 5, 73: 26) can have nothing outside the Lord. But if anyone should have anything besides the Lord, the Lord will not be his portion. In other words, if anyone has gold, or silver, or possessions, or a variety of furnishings, the Lord takes no pleasure in equating his portion with these portions.

Erasmus interjects with a series of rhetorical questions:

What are you saying most holy Jerome? Do you deny that they are clergy, do you deny that the Lord wishes to have any part with those who own estates and furniture at home? Even if these things came to them by inheritance? What would you do with so many Christian priests, so wealthy that worldly princes envy them? What about bishops, who own so many towns, to say nothing of spoils? What about supreme pontiffs who even go to war for money and plunder?

Erasmus' answer is to show, or perhaps to feign, respect for wealthy clerics. We would not place Jerome among good men without their oracular pronouncements. We became Christians through them, and they determined whether we would be joined to or separated from Christ. Besides believing that God considers them his portion, we hold that Christ's spirit reposes in their breasts. Their towering palaces, their multitudes of servants, their armed retainers, their cavalry, all of their possessions sparkling with jewels, gold, and, purple do not offend us, so much so that "we believe this tumult of things to belong to the dignity of the Church." Therefore, Jerome's statements must be interpreted as counsels, not as precepts, the product of his ruthless dislike of the deterioration in his day of the piety of the clergy, who were increasingly inclined towards "worldly arrogance" and "the desire of riches" when the wealth of priests should be heavenly, not earthly.

Erasmus quotes Jerome again: "The glory of a bishop is to provide for the needs of the poor; the disgrace of all priests is to strive for their own wealth." Again Erasmus defuses the Hieronymian state-

ment: "He does not at all condemn priests who have riches, but those who strive after them." Evidently, to have (*habere*) is justifiable, to strive (*studere*) is not. Erasmus allows himself to acknowledge one condemnation, however. Jerome condemned bishops who accumulate wealth for "profane and impious uses" instead of saving it for "the upkeep of the poor."²⁵⁸ We might ask whether the construction of palaces should be considered among the "profane and impious uses" of wealth or whether the papal wars for plunder are quests for wealth that are "profane and impious."

Those who spend money on the construction of lavish churches do not win the esteem of Jerome in his letter to Demetrias (ep. 130). Yet he refrains from issuing a rebuke, allowing everyone his or her own opinion and admitting: "It is better to do this than to brood upon laid-up wealth." Erasmus comments that Jerome seems to say this with reluctance. He unwillingly approves of building sumptuous churches and compares this not with pious but with wicked things. Either he is referring not simply to those who build churches but to those who build them for pride more than for piety, or he is simply saying that it makes sense to excel at spending resources on the poor, "the living temples of God," than on inanimate structures, "even if now many see it differently, especially the powerful."²⁵⁹

In his eulogy of Paula (ep. 108), Jerome too does not condemn the construction of splendid churches, Erasmus says. Yet he denies that therein lies, in the editor's words, the "summit of virtue" and prefers that alms be spent on Christ's poor, the "living temples of God." Erasmus duly ends his *antidotus* with two quotations from the letter to support this conclusion. But he begins the paratext with the observation that some might take offence at Jerome's dim view of using one's own money to build or decorate churches, "when most people in these times think that this is the essence of piety." Erasmus proceeds to assail the view held by some princes, to say nothing of bishops, that the construction of some little holy edifice with money taken from others makes up for wars, massacres, and sacrileges. Priests value the raising of funds for a church so much that they insist that it is "an unforgivable sacrilege" to divert some of these funds to relieve the starving poor, claiming that this is tantamount to despoil-

²⁵⁸ Jerome: CSEL 54: 421-22, 425; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 6r, 6v.

²⁵⁹ Jerome: CSEL 56/1: 194-95; Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 1: 28r-28v.

ing Christ himself or the Virgin Mary. As if, Erasmus retorts, Christ, who taught that one should give secretly to the poor, “would rejoice in these bits of display, or as if Mary most holy would rejoice in trifles of the same kind when she always neglected them during her lifetime.”²⁶⁰

Erasmus seems more genuine in making Jerome palatable to his readers when confronting the Church Father’s thinking on marriage. He concedes that in the letter to Ageruchia the widow (ep. 123) Jerome “inveighs against a second marriage rather harshly and indeed almost abusively.” Three quotations prove what Erasmus means, and yet the Church dignifies second and even third marriages by calling them a sacrament. Erasmus explains: “But St. Jerome, owing to a sort of most passionate love of chastity, sometimes is more unfair to marriage, especially if it is repeated.” The editor doubts that the Church counted marriage among the sacraments when Jerome lived and manages to defend Jerome while criticizing contemporary theologians. It was necessary for Jerome to make his case more vehemently “because even we are sufficiently impelled towards lust, and at that time there arose those who almost placed marriage before celibacy.” Today, some theologians loosen, more than is called for in Erasmus’ opinion, the bonds of a married couple, although Jerome understands the unsullied marriage bed of Hebrews 13: 4 to mean the quest for chastity of a husband and wife in a marriage that imitates virginity. It seems too that in the well-known letter to Eustochium (ep. 22) Jerome has some harsh things to say against marriage, “which he does not entirely favour,” Erasmus opines; immediately, however, the editor changes course: “or rather, he favours it so much more because he wants it to be polluted as little as possible by lust and very similar to virginity.” An unfair assessment of sample quotations and of still other passages makes these appear at odds with “the common opinion of theologians who make marriage one of the seven sacraments. But if all of these are read in accordance with the spirit with which Jerome wrote them, they contain nothing that would offend anyone.”²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ *Opera* (1516), 1: 80r-80v.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 1: 41r, 62r.

In the *Adversus Helvidium*, Jerome does not give marriage its due and seems to disapprove of it unless it displays “a zeal for chastity and an imitation of virginity.” After sampling some of Jerome’s remarks, Erasmus struggles to make sense of them. Do they represent his own “immoderate brand of love for chastity that he drives home so often” or a rhetorical device as he indicates in the treatise? Erasmus continues to ask:

Is he more inclined to this position because Helvidius puts marriage on the same footing as virginity, and so, according to the proverb, he aims at unfairness in order to achieve fairness (cf. *Adages* II.iii.26)? Or is it sufficient that he claims at the beginning of this dispute that he is not disparaging marriage when he praises virginity so that these things, which seem to be said rather harshly, should always be taken in keeping with that standard?²⁶²

All the options that Erasmus presents to his readers direct them away from the conclusion that Jerome was a principled opponent of marriage.

Erasmus acknowledges that much in the *Adversus Jovinianum* could give great offence, “especially in this day and age in which marriage is also placed among the sacraments.” How strange that Jovinian and Jerome did not recall this when the former praised marriage and the latter refuted his opponent. Since Jerome supplies “an antidote in the following letters,” that is in the apologies for the *Adversus Jovinianum* addressed to Pammachius and Domnio, Erasmus does not need to produce his own.²⁶³ Thus, in a sense, the *antidotus* to the polemic is not one at all.

In the *antidoti*, Erasmus brings into sharp relief the difference between the ancient past of Christianity and the practice and doctrine of Christianity in his own present. It should come as no surprise that Jerome in the eulogy of Nepotian (ep. 60) quoted Tertullian, who fell in with the Montanist heresy, because at that time it was acceptable to quote from any book for scholarly purposes. Jerome’s notion of episcopal equality in the letter to Evangelus (ep. 146) is unlike the later relationships among bishops and with the Roman pontiff. That Jerome attributes less dignity to bishops than they seem to have “in these times” is not relevant to “this era, but to the one

²⁶² Ibid., 3: 7v.

²⁶³ Ibid., 3: 46r.

in which Jerome lived. If he had seen our bishops, he would have said something very different.”²⁶⁴

Elucidating the letter to Nepotian (ep. 52) in an *antidotus*, Erasmus distinguishes between the primitive Church and the Church of his experience. The early Church, “deprived of the comforts of this world, prevailed only in the abundance of Christ, and, moreover, it flourished the more gloriously in the latter inasmuch as it withdrew further from the former.” Then gradually influence came its way, then the patronage of Christian princes, and finally wealth and all-encompassing power (*imperium*). Erasmus lets others decide whether any of this is consistent with the philosophy of Christ. He writes *scholia*; he does not formulate doctrines.²⁶⁵

The purpose of the *antidoti* is to attribute the discomfort that Erasmus’ readers might feel to the discrepancy of the times and often enough to inflict discomfort on his readers by contrasting the ideals of Christian antiquity embodied in Jerome with the demise of these ideals evident in their own religious malpractice. The conclusion that Erasmus leaves for others to draw is that the philosophy of Christ has been eviscerated. This is arguably the subtext of Erasmus’ studied ambiguity about the problem of wealth. Clausi’s claim for the *scholia* certainly applies to the *antidoti*: “To comment on Jerome means to show how his writings were and remain the foundation of a more authentic Christian tradition.”²⁶⁶

Unlike what it has since become, monasticism in Jerome’s day was simpler and more authentic. It made room for eloquence. It held the world in contempt. In the *antidotus* to the letter to Rusticus the monk (ep. 125), Erasmus wonders whether it would be better for the Church to have fewer monasteries. Jerome’s belief, expressed in the letter to Ageruchia (ep. 123), that the law of the gospel does not permit warfare contrasts with the excessive interest in war on the part of sixteenth-century Christians. The letter to Fabiola on Israel’s forty-two stations in the desert (ep. 78) gives Erasmus the opportunity to emphasize the difference between Jerome’s distrust of the teachings of the philosophers and scholastic theology’s fascination with Aristotle. Had Jerome witnessed “this theology, infected, or rather

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 1: 16r, 3: 150v.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 1: 6v.

²⁶⁶ Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre*, 226.

overrun, by Aristotelian opinions and rules, he would have thundered without any restraint against so unworthy a thing.” When he writes of Christian triumphs to Hedibia, he means that apostolic men should conquer by martyrdom (*sanguine*) not by force of arms, and that Christianity is best defended this way too. This view is at odds with current opinion and with the triumphs of Julius II. When in answer to Algasia’s sixth question Jerome holds that anyone who loves money cannot love God, where are those Christians who permit the raising of funds for war?²⁶⁷

Conclusion

Erasmus conceived of his *argumenta* as doors opening the reader into Jerome’s letters. Other paratexts had the same liminal function. But if they served as portals into Jerome’s world, configured textually, they also functioned as thresholds for editors to take Jerome into the world of their readers. If, as Lisa Jardine claimed, Erasmus’ edition of Jerome’s letters “made the saint vividly present to a congregation of those committed to his trilingual learning, and his liberal attitude to biblical textual reconstruction and exegesis,”²⁶⁸ then editorial commentary on the letters could and did help to usher Jerome into a new age. But the paratextual commentary went beyond a humanist elite to address potentially all Christian readers. Both Erasmus and Vittori wondered what Jerome would say if he had witnessed the state of Christendom in the sixteenth century. Clausi held that a *scholion* was not only a “bridge to an ancient author;” it was also “a road that led outside of the text” to demonstrate the text’s relationships with “external realities beyond words” so that one could turn to the text “with a heightened level of associations (*conoscenze*) and thus with a different degree of sensitivity.”²⁶⁹

As perceptive and responsive readers, Jerome’s editors facilitated crossings in and out of his texts with headnotes, sidenotes, footnotes, and endnotes. They guided and educated a new readership. Catching his references to classical authors and to the Bible, they mapped

²⁶⁷ *Opera* (1516), 1: 20r, 41r, 4: 23v, 70r, 79v.

²⁶⁸ Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 148.

²⁶⁹ Clausi, *Ridar voce all’antico Padre*, 220.

out the literary universe of Jerome's writings. These they summarized, identifying his friends and foes and occasionally setting the historical background for his controversies. Editors proposed and argued for superior readings of Jerome, expanded the vocabulary of their readers, and gave them the rhetorical, historical, and geographical data that permitted a more complete and sophisticated appreciation of Jerome's texts. Religion was the most powerful tool for making these texts relevant for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europeans.

For Erasmus Jerome's writings were Christian declamations in which eloquence served piety. The programme of combining eloquence and piety that Erasmus ascribed to Christian rhetoricians was also his own. For Chomarat Erasmus' *scholia* manifested this combination.²⁷⁰ Interpreting eloquence as a species of erudition, we could easily amend Chomarat's formula. Erasmus' *scholia* bear witness to an integration of erudition and piety, of philology and theology, and thus reflect what Mark Vessey has called Erasmus' *philologia Christi*.²⁷¹ Erasmus attacked scholastic theologians not simply because they eschewed eloquence but because they constructed Christian theology upon dubious, pagan foundations. The tirades against the spiritual and moral failings of Christians are certainly not dispassionate lessons in philology, but they are not tangential to Erasmus' editorial enterprise. The *antidoti* emphasize the constitutive Christian element in elucidating Jerome.

Vittori's edition is as much an emulation as it is a repudiation of Erasmus. Plagiarism aside, Vittori sought to improve upon Erasmus. Erudition and piety unite in his *scholia* too. Misreadings of Jerome offend his impeccable orthodoxy and harm the unchanging tradition of Christian truth preserved within Catholicism alone. Vittori's scholastic scholarship exhibits what we might call his *philologia Catholica*.

To elucidate Jerome, *illustrare Hieronymum*, was by no means a simple editorial task. It was part of the enterprise of resuscitating the ancient Church Father into a new world of readers. In refashioning Jerome, his editors sought to transform, or at least, admonish this world, a world that ought to embrace the ideals, learning, and style of antiquity as refined by Christianity. The appropriation of Jerome

²⁷⁰ Chomarat, *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Érasme*, 1: 537.

²⁷¹ Mark Vessey, "Erasmus' Lucubrations and the Renaissance Life of Texts," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 24 (2004): 31.

inscribed into various genres of paratexts was nothing other than an industrious editorial *instauratio Hieronymiana*. To revive Jerome in this way and to absorb him once printed and elucidated were both intellectual labours of Herculean proportions.

CONCLUSION

The reputation of Erasmus as an editor of Jerome survived into the early modern and modern periods despite the attempts of Peter Canisius and especially of Mariano Vittori to dislodge his influence. Even when later editors called his skills into question, they did not do so for confessional reasons. Editors of Jerome in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had to contend with the legacy of Erasmus just as their predecessors did in the second half of the sixteenth century.

In 1684, Adam Tribbechow (1641-1687), the Lutheran theologian and devotional writer, became the first Protestant to publish Jerome's *opera omnia*. Between 1659 and 1662, he studied in Rostock, Wittenberg, Leipzig, and Helmstedt, where he lived in the house of one of his teachers, Friedrich Ulrich Calixt (1622-1701). He taught sacred, ecclesiastical, and secular history in Kiel until 1672, when Duke Ernst I of Saxony-Gotha and Altenburg appointed him to the ecclesiastical consistory in Gotha. Tribbechow dedicated his edition of Jerome, for which Calixt wrote a preface, to the son and successor of Ernst, Duke Friedrich I. The edition, which appeared in Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig thanks to the printer Christian Gensch, consisted of twelve volumes. The first nine served as a reissue of Erasmus' edition. Reflecting the irenic outlook of Tribbechow and Calixt at a time when Lutherans were divided in the so-called *synkretistischer Streit* on the question of forging confessional peace in Germany, the edition supplied commentary by several Catholic scholars. Tribbechow placed in the tenth volume the *scholia* of Vittori, the annotations of Henricus Gravius, as well as notes by the Jesuit patrologist Fronton Du Duc (1559-1624) and the Italian patrologist Latino Latini (1513-1593). The eleventh volume contained discussions of "difficult" terms arranged in alphabetical order by the Spanish Hieronymite theologian Francisco a Messana, previously printed in Madrid in 1593, and the *Considerations of Scholastic Theology or Observations on the Works of St. Jerome* (*Advertentiae scholasticae theologiae, sive Animadversiones in S. Hieronymi opera*) by another Spaniard, Ferdinando Velloso, who served as one of King Philip II's theologians at the

Council of Trent and as Bishop of Lugo from 1567 until his death in 1587. Analytical indices in the final volume allowed readers to navigate the edition according to, among other things, biblical references, theological concepts, and philosophical, philological, and historical topics.¹

Tribbechow's *parti pris* for Erasmus was evident in the first sentence of his preface addressed to the reader: "Here you have, meticulous reader, a new edition of Jerome, which has been taken from the Erasmian, and thus the most approved, version." Why did Tribbechow not follow Vittori? His reader should know that Vittori left or struck out or, what was more often the case, falsified "the learned prefaces of Erasmus, also the *censurae* and furthermore the notes." No doubt acting on the wish of his superiors, Vittori made it his business to defraud Erasmus of the acclaim that he won for his edition of Jerome, and he spread hatred for Erasmus for having censured the notorious morals of the clergy both in the religious situation of his day and in confrontation with the works of Jerome. He sought to remove the scandal from the minds of those who thought that it had arisen in the Church as a result of Erasmus' scholarship. Tribbechow, adapting to his purpose the proverb taken from Terence, *obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit* (*Andria* 68, cf. *Adages* II.ix.53), concludes: "Thus compliance obtained friends for Mariano, but for Erasmus truth produced hatred." In order to secure the applause of his contemporaries, Vittori advertised his extensive collation of manuscripts on the title page of his edition, as if Erasmus had neglected

¹ *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 56 vols. (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1875-1912), 38: 595-98, s. v. "Tribbechow: Adam," by A. Schumann; *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1953—), 3: 96, s. v. "Friedrich Ulrich Claixst(us)," by Hermann Schüssler; *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús: biográfico-temático*, ed. Charles E. O'Neill, Joaquín Ma. Domínguez, 4 vols. (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu; Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2001), 2: 1152, s. v. "Du Duc (Le Duc), Fronton," by J. P. Donnelly; Pierre Petitmengin, "Latino Latini (1513-1593): une longue vie au service des Pères de l'Église," in *Humanisme et Église en Italie et en France méridionale (XVe siècle—milieu du XVIe siècle)*, ed. Patrick Gilli (Rome: École française de Rome, 2004), 381-407; Hubert Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient*, 4 vols. in 5 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1949-1975), 4/1: 60; *Diccionario de Historia Eclesiástica de España*, ed. Quintín Aldea Vaquero, Tomás Marín Martínez, José Vives Gatell, 4 vols. (Madrid: Instituto Enrique Florez, 1972-1975), 2: 1357, s. v. "Lugo, Diócesis de" by A. García Conde; *Hierarchia catholica medii et recentiores aevi, sive Summorum Pontificum, S. R. E. Cardinalium, ecclesiarum antistitum series*, 2nd ed., vol. 3, ed. Wilhelm van Gulk, Conrad Eubel, and Ludwig Schmitz-Kallenberg (Münster: Libraria Regensbergiana, 1923), 229.

this. In fact, trusting in his manuscripts, he expunged and wanted to read differently what Erasmus encountered in his manuscripts. These Erasmian readings, if one examines Jerome's texts carefully, should have carried the day.²

In his preface, Calixt sounds a respectfully critical note. He assures the friendly reader that "this, our edition" imitates the one that Johann Froben produced at Basel. No other edition had come out more correct or was regarded as better. One man was not enough for "this Herculean labour," which benefited especially from the Amerbach brothers, above all when it came to correcting and restoring Hebrew words. Despite the edition's manifold excellence, deficiencies here and there should not be surprising, for *non omnia possumus omnes*. Without any disrespect one can say that Erasmus was a better philologist than a philosopher. The "glory of eloquence" was certainly his due. Yet regard for eloquence should not lead to a rejection of all scholastic theology or of philosophy. Erasmus surely did not believe that everything that did not have the flavour of Ciceronian eloquence should be banished from theology.³

In 1602, the General Assembly of the Clergy of France, deploring the fact that "most of the Greek and Latin Fathers, necessary for stirring up controversies, were printed with falsehoods in London, in Frankfurt, and in Basel, heretical cities," decided that new patristic editions should be printed in Paris.⁴ Indeed, the French capital became an important centre for printing the Fathers in the seventeenth century. Thanks largely to Maurist monks, the last third of the seventeenth century "marked in France a golden age in patristic studies." The French Congregation of St. Maur, a reform of Benedictine monasticism that obtained papal approval in 1621 and whose intellectual hub was the Parisian monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Près, "became the only congregation really to devote itself as a body to patristic scholarship." At the beginning of the eighteenth century, patrology was "the claim to fame of the Maurists in the public eye, their specialty, and even a little their patrimony."⁵ The widest pos-

² *Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia*, 12 vols. (Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig: Christian Gensch, 1684), 1:)(3r.

³ *Ibid.*, 1: 2, 5.

⁴ Quoted in Jean-Louis Quantin, *Le catholicisme classique et les Pères de l'Église: Un retour aux sources (1669-1713)* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1999), 161.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 157, 192, 194. For a brief survey of the origins and the evolving nature of the work of the Maurists, see Daniel-Odon Hurel, "The Benedictines of the Congre-

sible consultation of manuscripts, recourse to a network of friendships within the Church, a rigorous method of establishing texts, and the “suppression of the confessionalism that had characterized the editions of the Counter Reformation” informed the Maurist enterprise of editing the Fathers.⁶

Dom Jean Martianay (1647-1717) joined the Maurists in Toulouse in 1668. At the end of the 1680s, the Congregation called him to Paris to produce an edition of Jerome.⁷ The five-volume edition appeared in print between 1693 and 1706. Martianay thought highly of his work and told his readers so. The “true Jerome” contained within “this new edition” had until the present time no equal in previously printed books. The “genuine Jerome,” everywhere corrupted, was not available. Martianay made it his responsibility to restore and emend Jerome from the testimony of many ancient manuscripts, not from “futile conjectures.” Without hesitation the Maurist editor stated that “in our edition Jerome himself had emended and restored by his own hand, as it were, whatever had been corrupted in the old books published before us.”⁸

Maurist historians were not impressed. Dom Philippe Le Cerf de la Viéville (1677-1748) held that the edition of Jerome was “the most defective” of all the editions published by the Benedictines. Dom René Prosper Tassin (1697-1777) recorded the criticism of “the very awkward order” in which Jerome’s letters appeared and complained of the inadequate grammatical and theological commentary.⁹ Modern scholars have perpetuated this Maurist disdain. The edition was worlds apart from the scholarship of the great early Maurist Dom Jean Mabillon (1632-1707); it should never have been printed; it was assuredly not a Maurist masterpiece.¹⁰

gation of St.-Maur and the Church Fathers,” in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, ed. Irena Backus, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 2: 1009-1038.

⁶ Quantin, *Le catholicisme classique*, 178.

⁷ Philippe Le Cerf de la Viéville, *Bibliothèque historique et critique des auteurs de la Congrégation de Saint-Maur* (The Hague: Pierre Gosse, 1726), 306-307; René Prosper Tassin, *Histoire littéraire de la Congrégation de Saint-Maur* (1770 repr., Ridgewood, NJ: Gregg Press, 1965), 382.

⁸ *Sancti Hieronymi Opera*, 5 vols. (Paris: Louis Roulland, 1693-1706), 2: e2r.

⁹ Le Cerf de la Viéville, *Bibliothèque historique et critique*, 321; Tassin, *Histoire littéraire*, 389.

¹⁰ Paul Antin, *Essai sur Saint Jérôme* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1951), 225; Louis Doutreleau, “Le *De Spiritu Sancto* de Didyme et ses éditeurs,” *Recherches de science religieuse*

Jerome's letters share the fourth volume with his New Testament commentaries. Martianay opens the volume with several pages of examples of how the readings of his edition, the *editio nova*, are superior to the *editio vetus*. This "old edition" is a composite of preceding editions. In notes attached to some of the comparisons, Martianay charges both Erasmus and Vittori, separately but usually together, with errors.¹¹ The sampling of revisions prove "most evidently" that he did not undertake to edit Jerome indifferently or rashly.¹² Martianay also frequently dismisses the readings of Erasmus and Vittori in footnotes to Jerome's letters. While the Maurist editor composed some of the introductions to Jerome's letters or treatises, he does not, however, express his debt to Erasmus when appropriating many of his *argumenta* either in their entirety or in revised form. He leaves a hint that he borrowed from Erasmus in the *argumentum* to the polemic against Vigilantius. Martianay reproduces the Erasmian paratext until Erasmus begins criticizing Jerome for his verbal violence. A sentence defending Jerome's attack on Vigilantius replaces Erasmus' criticism. Then Martianay follows Erasmus again. Gennadius held that Vigilantius was eloquent but lacked knowledge of the Bible. Jerome attributed neither eloquence nor biblical expertise to his opponent. The final sentence quotes Erasmus and then refers to him: "Yet the passages that Jerome quotes suggest a modest elegance of speech, if we believe Erasmus."¹³

The fifth volume, which contains the *spuria*, is more generous in acknowledging Erasmus. In the detailed table of contents, Martianay freely admits that the *spuria* appear along with the *censurae* of Erasmus. He ends the extensive front matter of the volume with a section entitled *Excellentia Hieronymi ex Erasmo*, a long exposition of the "pre-eminence of Jerome" excerpted from Erasmus' dedicatory letter to William Warham in the first volume of his edition of the Church Father.¹⁴ Towards the end of the volume after the last scriptural commentary incorrectly ascribed to Jerome, Martianay adds without

51 (1963): 402; Jean-Louis Quantin, "L'oeuvre mauriste et ses détracteurs," in *Les Mauristes à Saint-Germain-des-Prés: Actes du Colloque de Paris (2 décembre 1999)*, ed. Jean-Claude Fredouille (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2001), 68.

¹¹ *Sancti Hieronymi Opera*, 4: e1r-e2v, e4r, e4v.

¹² *Ibid.*, 4: i2r.

¹³ Erasmus: *Opera* (1516), 3: 55r; Martianay: *Sancti Hieronymi Opera*, 4: part 2, col. 280.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 5: a3r, cols. 67-70 (front matter); Allen 2: 214-218, ep. 396.

explanation Erasmus' rhetorical commentary—the *artis annotatio*—on the letter to Heliodorus (ep. 52).¹⁵

In the eighteenth century, expertise in editing the Church Fathers spread from France to Italy and Germany. In Italy, assisted by his teacher Scipio Maffei, Domenico Vallarsi (1702-1771), a diocesan priest of Verona, produced an edition of Jerome that counts, according to Pierre Petitmengin, as a work of “excellent quality.” The eleven-volume edition first appeared in Vallarsi's native Verona between 1734 and 1742. Jacques-Paul Migne absorbed the second edition (Venice, 1776-1772) into his *Patrologia Latina* in the nineteenth century. In 1745, also in Verona, Vallarsi published an incomplete edition of the works of Rufinus. As a patristic editor, Vallarsi relied on the patronage of Verona and of Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758).¹⁶

Erasmus occupies a prominent place in Vallarsi's survey of editing Jerome from the manuscript collections of the Church Father's works to Martianay. In his “general preface,” the new Italian editor recalls that Erasmus was the first to undertake an edition of all of Jerome's works. An expert in the ancient method of purifying texts, he revised Jerome's writings by drawing on a variety of manuscripts and applying his keen sense of judgment. He prefaced the treatises and letters with summaries and finally elucidated these with *scholia* and notes that were “sufficiently scholarly.” Erasmus was the first to separate out the *spuria*, briefly and learnedly strafing them one by one “with a piercing inspection and with censures.” Erasmus had his faults, however. No one would begrudge him the recognition that his hard work merited

if he had refrained from that unbridled and patently reckless malignancy of berating the most holy Fathers in pursuit of his own fame. And if he praised them anywhere even to excess, he did so deliberately so that afterwards he could criticize them with less spite and with greater recognition for himself. If only in bringing forward his criticisms, he had abstained from harming sacred matters and had not so completely mixed up the writings of both the ancient Fathers and of

¹⁵ *Sancti Hieronymi Opera*, 5: cols. 1105-1108.

¹⁶ Pierre Petitmengin, “Les patrologies avant Migne,” in *Migne et le renouveau des études patristiques: Actes du Colloque de Saint-Flour*, ed. A. Mandouze and J. Fouilheron (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985), 30; *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 3d ed., ed. Walter Kasper, 11 vols. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1993-2001), 10: col. 529, s. v. “Vallarsi, Domenico,” by Hubertus R. Drobner; CCSL 79: 265*.

Jerome with his often useless conjectures that scarcely anything certain about the tradition of the Church could be established on the basis of his opinion if later theologians had not voiced their opposition.

Since from the perspective of scholars and of the Church's teaching Erasmus' edition had not attained "appropriate perfection," Mariano Vittori undertook a new edition in the interests of literature. Although Vittori's edition was not longer than that of Erasmus and virtually replicated its classification, it was more accurate.¹⁷ In footnotes to Jerome's letters, Vallarsi nevertheless often registers his disagreement with Vittori's readings. At least in one place, however, he sided with Vittori against Erasmus and Martianay.¹⁸ Vallarsi must have delighted in pointing out that Martianay's divergent readings frequently coincided with those of Erasmus.¹⁹

Erasmus emerges not only in the footnotes but also in Vallarsi's *argumenta*. In the preface to first volume, which contained Jerome's letters, the Veronese editor points out that Martianay copied many of these. Yet the Erasmian *argumenta* "swarmed with errors and, moreover, often defied history." Without explaining his decision, Vallarsi states that he has either reproduced them in their entirety or, in most cases, corrected them.²⁰ A comparison of the *argumenta* in the editions of Erasmus and Vallarsi reveals that the latter in several instances revised the paratexts of the former only slightly. Whereas Erasmus writes that Jerome urged Furia to remain unmarried (*in coelibatu*), Vallarsi writes that he urged her to remain a widow (*in viduitate*). Vallarsi simply rearranges the syntax of Erasmus' *argumentum* to the letter to Tranquillinus.²¹

Erasmus' editorial influence has survived into the present day. While Isidore Hilberg, who produced a critical edition of Jerome's letters for the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* at the beginning of the twentieth century, did not include Erasmus' edition of Jerome in his apparatus, more recently editors engaged by the *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* have done so. Apart from manuscripts, they use as resources Erasmus' edition as well as incunabular editions and

¹⁷ PL 22: XIII-XIV, XIV-XV.

¹⁸ PL 22: 482 n. e.

¹⁹ For some examples, see PL 22: 388 n. c, 398 n. f, 545 n. a, 547 n. c, 566 n. g, 609 nn. b, c, 886 n. f, 911 n. c.

²⁰ PL 22: XLVII-XLVIII.

²¹ Erasmus: (*Opera*) 1516, 1: 35v, 3: 143r. Vallarsi: PL 22: 550, 606.

those prepared by Vittori, Martianay, and Vallarsi. Claudio Moreschini, whose edition of Jerome's *Dialogue against the Pelagians* appeared in 1990, credited Erasmus with publishing the first readable text of the treatise after eliminating the errors and lacunae of the first printed edition, which for Moreschini was Bussi's first edition of the *Epistolae* (1468). More than all the other editors, Erasmus established a text that sufficiently approximated that of Jerome, although to his discredit he arbitrarily modified the text. Successive editors could not do without Erasmus, however, even when they challenged him.²²

A remark by Paul Antin, a twentieth-century patristics scholar, in his *Essai sur Saint Jérôme* (1951) shows how far-reaching an effect Erasmus' self-promotion has had. With the coming of print, Jerome achieved a "new life." After acknowledging the Roman edition of Giovanni Andrea Bussi and that printed by Peter Schoeffer in Mainz, Antin affirmed: *Il faut attendre Érasme pour que Jérôme ressuscite véritablement*—"It was necessary to wait for Erasmus so that Jerome could really come back to life."²³ Erasmus would have been pleased to read that more than four hundred years after he had published Jerome a reputable scholar still hailed him as the pre-eminent agent of Jerome's literary resurrection. His quest for and accumulation of editorial credit has had a long history in print culture.

Scholars, of course, must be wary of swallowing Erasmian propaganda hook, line, and sinker. Before Erasmus Jerome could depend on the help of countless others to keep alive his reputation as a learned Christian author: Boniface VIII; Giovanni d'Andrea; scores of scribes and the monasteries, bishops, and princes that encouraged the transcription of Jerome's letters and other works; illuminators and painters, who made virtually ubiquitous the image of the studious penitent or cardinal; humanists in Italy and elsewhere, who took Jerome as their patron; editors, such as Teodoro de' Lelli, Bussi, and Adrian Brielis; and printers, such as Sextus Riessinger, Conrad Sweynheym, Arnold Pannartz, Schoeffer, Nicolaus Kesler, and Jacques Saccon. Jerome was very much alive when Erasmus read him as a young monk and while he prepared his edition, which

²² CCSL 80: xxvi, xxix.

²³ Paul Antin, *Essai sur Saint Jérôme* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1951), 224.

helped him secure for himself lasting fame—and some infamy—in the realm of Christian scholarship.

Erasmus owed a debt to his predecessors. He used earlier printed editions to establish his Hieronymian texts. Rearranged, Lelli's tripartite classification of these texts survived in Erasmus' edition, as did his strategy of introducing them with *argumenta*. Erasmus' decision to write a biography of Jerome based on the Church Father's writings had its precedents. He may not have been aware of Nicolò Maniacoria's biography, but he knew *Plerosque nimirum*, the biography which Bussi placed at the beginning of his edition and which Erasmus published with the *spuria*. Although it told the story of Jerome and his legendary lion, it referred often to his works. Erasmus was also not the first editor to publish Jerome with humanist credentials. Lelli valued Jerome's Christian scholarship. The anthology that Johannes Rhagius Aesticampianus published served as a pedagogical tool showing students the union of eloquence and piety in Jerome. This same combination attracted the editor of the anthology that Willem Vorsterman printed in 1515. For Johann Lang, Jerome's eloquent missives challenged the assumption that Christians could safely dispense with secular learning and the edifice of scholastic theology.

Erasmus, of course, made a difference in editing Jerome. This was in part owing to his effort to promote the edition. The adulation that he and the edition received was an index of the success of his self-promotion. Both the professor of sacred theology and his sympathetic learned readers agreed that as a result of his hard work he had restored not only Jerome but ancient Christian theology as well. His various editorial interventions were proof of his labours, especially the more than 4,000 *scholia*. A system of classification inscribed into the first table of contents for the first time deliberately segregated the genuine from the counterfeit Jerome, resulting in the quarantine of most of the *spuria* in a separate volume. *Censurae* reinforced their inauthenticity. The dedicatory epistle to Archbishop William Warham and Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi* prepared readers for the Jerome that they would encounter in the edition: the holy man, the eloquent writer, the consummate scholar, the doctor of the Church, the embodiment of a *via media* between a scholasticism in which logic desiccated piety and a humanism in search of eloquence and erudition without due regard for piety. The *argumenta* and the *scholia* bore

witness to this partisan portrait, but in them Erasmus also revealed an all too human side of the saint as he pointed out Jerome's lapses in memory and bemoaned his zest for controversy. These two paratextual genres demonstrated the compatibility of scholarship and piety. The *antidoti* undergirded a Christian reading of Jerome.

Another index of Erasmus' success is the attention that his edition of Jerome sustained in the sixteenth century. In print until 1565, almost half of the century, it became ensconced in the history of the transmission of Jerome, both in anthologies and in complete editions of his letters or of all his works. In Italy, the anthology printed by Lucantonio Giunta more or less followed the order in which Erasmus placed Jerome's letters. In Spain, Juan Corduba condensed Erasmus' *Vita Hieronymi* and reproduced some of his *scholia* in an anthology intended to introduce students to Christian eloquence. Canisius developed his own classification for an anthology meant to protect Catholic students from Erasmus' baleful influence. As I have suggested elsewhere, Canisius, however, seems in at least two cases to have composed *argumenta* for the second edition of the *Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis* (1565) with an eye on Erasmus' *argumenta*.²⁴ Vittori attacked Erasmus more vehemently and plagiarized him more persistently. Without protest he adopted Erasmus' classification and, with the exception of the *antidoti*, his paratextual genres. The debt to Erasmus, evident at least methodologically in Vittori's biography of Jerome, gained momentum in the *argumenta*. For all the abuse to which Vittori subjected Erasmus in the *scholia* he also profited from his deceased rival's editorial scholarship.

How Michel de Certeau characterized the relationship between a text and its readers is relevant to the study of the editing of Jerome's texts in the Renaissance:

Whether it is a question of newspapers or Proust, the text has a meaning only through its readers; it changes along with them; it is ordered in accord with codes of perception that it does not control. It becomes a text only in its relation to the exteriority of the reader, by an interplay of implications and ruses between two sorts of "expectation" in combination: the expectation that organizes a *readable* space (a literality),

²⁴ Hilmar M. Pabel, "Peter Canisius as a Catholic Editor of a Catholic St. Jerome," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 96 (2005): 182-84, 192.

and one that organizes a procedure necessary for the *actualization* of the work (a reading).

Certeau was chiefly interested in the 'ordinary' reader or consumer of texts, not the intellectuals who produced texts and dared to dictate their meaning to readers at large, thus interposing

a frontier between the text and its readers that can be crossed only if one has a passport delivered by these official interpreters, who transform their own reading (which is *also* a legitimate one) into an orthodox "literality" that makes other (equally legitimate) readings either heretical (not "in conformity" with the meaning of the text) or insignificant (to be forgotten).²⁵

Jerome's Renaissance editors, elitist in one way or another, produced the Church Father's letters for a market of consumers, who were often students in arts or theology and whose reading ability gave them purchase of at least some measure of social standing in a Europe in which most people could not read. Organizing a readable space and actualizing a reading of Jerome's letters, editorial paratexts were the measure of the producers' efforts to acquire meaning for their reading of Jerome and to control the meaning that consumers derived from their own reading. That Erasmus' paratexts attracted the criticism of self-appointed and official censors alike shows that his reading of Jerome was capable of resistance, but not before his critics read his numerous editorial interventions.

Erasmus stood in a continuum, not at the crossroads, of the reception and transmission of Jerome's meaning. He was not the first to vest Jerome in humanist raiment, but because of what he called his Herculean editorial labours he was certainly not the last. Arguably, Jerome's self-promotion as a paragon of eloquence, erudition, and exegesis in the service of Christianity contributed considerably to the humanist fascination with and transmission of his writings. Humanist propaganda about Jerome owed its staying power in part to Jerome's propaganda about himself. What set Erasmus apart from his humanist predecessors was the tangible evidence in vast paratextual quantity of his work to make sense of Jerome, to give readers a Jerome who was no less Christian for having written elegant Latin, having read pagan authors, and having learned Greek and Hebrew. Eloquence

²⁵ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 170-71.

and erudition were not mere secular sidelights to Jerome's Christianity, nor did they sum him up, reducing his religious commitment to a curious distraction. They were integral to his Christian literary production. That was the lesson of Erasmus' edition of Jerome. It was the Erasmian legacy to later editors. To be sure, Vittori unambiguously ordered his reading of Jerome in accordance with a confessionalized code of perception, resurrecting an impeccably Catholic authority to trounce Protestant heresy. Yet his Jerome was no less Catholic for being an eloquent scholar, susceptible to explanation by the Renaissance humanist tools of philology, rhetorical analysis, and historical investigation.

Was Holbein's portrait of Erasmus the Herculean editor of Jerome a fabrication? In some ways, it was, yet in others it was an appropriate image. Erasmus' accomplishment was not exclusively his own. Behind it stood not only the scholars and printers who helped him revive Jerome but also traditions of editing and publishing Jerome upon which Erasmus drew. Nor was Erasmus an editor of assured rest. Jerome kept him busy, albeit intermittently, for the rest of his life, as Erasmus continued to tinker with revisions. By his own definition, Herculean labours were works beneficial to others that earned the labourer little or no appreciation. But even before the edition first went to print Erasmus orchestrated appreciation for it, and by the time he sent the portrait to Warham in 1524 he knew that he had won the esteem of fellow humanists. His campaign for credit succeeded. Yet success had its limits. Erasmus anticipated censure, rightly, as it turned out. Stunica and Alberto Pio mounted attacks during his lifetime. Despite imitating and plagiarizing him, Vittori held him up to scorn. One or more persons took the trouble to remove every trace of Erasmus from a copy of the 1516 edition by cutting out or pasting over his editorial interventions.²⁶ The paratexts thus obliterated represented Erasmus' scholarly toil. He worked in fields where others had laboured before him; that did not disqualify his hard work, however, or make it less impressive. From hindsight we might see in Holbein's portrait an Erasmus confident that the

²⁶ BAV, R. G. SS. Padri I. 90. For details see Hilmar M. Pabel, "Credit, Paratexts, and Editorial Strategies in Erasmus of Rotterdam's Editions of Jerome," in *Cognition and the Book: Typologies of Formal Organisation of Knowledge in the Printed Book of the Early Modern Period*, ed. Karl A. E. Enenkel and Wolfgang Neuber (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 251-52.

book he offered, the fruit of his labours, would not lack for readers. Judging by the publishing efforts of subsequent sixteenth-century editors, we can say that Erasmus perpetuated the Renaissance image of Jerome the Christian scholar. He contributed to the practice of reading Jerome into the modern era, and his Herculean labours are still on offer for scholars to assess.

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Incunabula by year of publication

[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Edited by Teodoro de' Lelli. [Rome: Sextus Riessinger, not after 1467].
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Edited by Giovanni Andrea Bussi. Rome: Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz, 1468.
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. [Strassburg: Johann Mentelin, not after 1469].
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Edited by Giovanni Andrea Bussi. Rome: Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz, 1470.
Epistolae beati Jeronimi. Edited by Adrian Brielis. Mainz: Peter Schoeffer, 1470.
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Venice: Antonio Miscomini, 1476.
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Edited by Giovanni Andrea Bussi. Rome: Arnold Pannartz, 1476, and Georg Lauer, 1479.
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Parma, 1480.
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Venice: Andreas Torresanus, 1488.
Epistolae Hieronymi. Basel: Nicolaus Kesler, 1489.
[*Epistolae Hieronymi*]. Venice: Bernardinus Benalius, 1490.
Epistolae beati Hieronymi. Basel: Nicolaus Kesler, 1492.
Epistolarum beati Hieronymi presbyteri omnes partes uno volumine contente. Nürnberg: Anton Koberger, 1495.
Epistolae Sancti Hieronymi. Venice: Giovanni Rubeo, 1496.
Liber Epistolarum sancti Hieronymi. Basel: Nicolaus Kesler, 1497.
Epistole de san hieronymo vulgare. Ferrara: Lorenzo di Rossi, 1497.

Erasmian editions: authorized, unauthorized, and posthumous by year of publication

- Omnium operum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis tomus primus [-nonus]*. Basel: Johann Froben, 1516.
- Divi Hieronymi epistola lepidissima ad Eustochium virginem, de custodienda virginitate. D. Erasmi Roterodami scholijs nimis quam festiviter enarrata*. Cologne: Eucharius Cervicornus, 1517.
- Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae tres, opera D. Erasmi Roterodami suae integritati iam restituae*. [Cologne], 1517.
- Divi Hieronymi epistolae tres ab Erasmo Roterodamo recognitae, cuius & argumentis & scholijs oppidoque elegantibus sunt illustratae*. [Cologne], 1518.
- S. Hieronymi lucubrationes omnes una cum pseudepigraphis, & alienis admixtis in novem digestae tomos, sed multo quam ante vigilantius per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM emendatae locis non paucis feliciter correctis, quibusdam etiam locupletatis, duntaxat in scholijs*. 9 vols. Basel: Johann Froben, 1524-1526.
- Epistolae divi Hieronymi: Opus epistolarum divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, optimo cuique Christianae religionis cultori perutile, una cum scholijs disertissimi viri Des. Erasmi Roterodami denuo per illum recognitum hacque ultima editione diligenter castigatum*. Lyon: Jacques Marechal, 1525.
- Opus epistolarum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, una cum scholijs Des. Erasmi Rotero. Denuo per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum*. Lyon: Jean Crespin, 1528.
- S. Hieronymi lucubrationes omnes una cum pseudepigraphis, & alienis admixtis, in novem digestae tomos, sed multo quam ante vigilantius per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM emendatae, locis non paucis feliciter correctis, quibusdam etiam locupletatis*. Lyon: Sebastian Gryphius, 1530.
- Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, opera omnia quae extant, una cum pseudepigraphis & alienis, in novem tomos digesta: ac nunc recens magna fide & diligentia cum vetustis Victorianae bibliothecae ad muros Parisienses exemplaribus collata, & restituta*. 9 vols. Paris: Claude Chevallon, 1533-1534.
- Opus epistolarum Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis una cum scholijs DES. ERASMI ROTERO. Denuo per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum*. Lyon: Jacques Giunta, 1535.
- Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes una cum pseudepigraphis, & alienis admixtis, in novem digestae tomos, sed multo quam ante vigilantius per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM nunc postremum emendatae, locis non paucis feliciter correctis, quibusdam etiam locupletatis, duntaxat in scholijs*. 9 vols. Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopius, 1536-1537.
- Opus epistolarum Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, una cum scholijs DES. ERASMI ROTERODAMI, nunc postremum per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum*. Basel: Froben, 1536-1537.
- [*Opus epistolarum Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis, una cum scholijs DES. ERASMI ROTERODAMI, nunc postremum per illum non vulgari cura recognitum, correctum ac locupletatum*]. Basel: Froben, 1543.
- Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, opera omnia quae extant, una cum pseudepigraphis et alienis admixtis in novem tomos digesta per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM nunc postremum emendata, locis non paucis foeliciter emendatis, et locupletatis duntaxat in scholijs*. 9 vols. Paris: Charlotte Guillard, 1546.

- Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes, additis una pseudepigraphis et alienis, scriptis ipsius admixtis, in novem tomos, per DES. ERASMUM ROTERODAMUM digestae, ac tanta vigilantia postremum emendatae, ut eruditus lector vix quicquam ultra queat desiderare.* 9 vols. Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nicolaus Episcopus, 1553.
- Omnes quae extant D. Hieronymi Stridonensis lucubrationes, additis una pseudepigraphis et alienis, scriptis ipsius admixtis, in novem tomos, per Des. Erasmus Roterodamum digestae, ac tanta vigilantia postremum emendatae, ut eruditus lector vix quicquam ultra queat desiderare.* 9 vols. Basel: Nicolaus and Eusebius Episcopus, 1565.

Peter Canisius' Anthologies

- Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis, eloquentissimi Ecclesiae Doctoris, in libros tres distributae.* Dillingen: Sebaldus Mayer, 1562.
- Epistolae B. Hieronymi Stridonensis, eloquentissimi et praestantissimi Ecclesiae Doctoris, in libros tres distributae, & ad collationem veterum exemplarium permultis in locis restitutae, ut haec secunda editio priorem longe antecellat.* Dillingen: Sebaldus Mayer, 1565.
- Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis, in libros tres distributae, & nunc tandem pristinae suae integritati restitutae.* Louvain: Hieronymus Wellaeus, 1573.
- D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae, & in libros tres distributae opera D. Petri Canisii Theologi. Nunc primum ad exemplar Mariani Victorii Reatini, Episcopi Amerini, emendatae, argumentisque illustratae.* Paris: Sébastien Nivelles, 1582.
- D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae, & in libros tres distributae opera D. Petri Canisii Theologi. Nunc primum ad exemplar Mariani Victorii Reatini, Episcopi Amerini, emendatae, argumentisque illustratae.* Paris: Sébastien Nivelles, 1583.
- D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae, & in libros tres distributae opera D. Petri Canisii Theologi. Nunc primum ad exemplar Mariani Victorii Reatini, Episcopi Amerini, emendatae, argumentisque illustratae.* Paris: Sébastien and Robert Nivelles, 1588.
- D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae & in libros tres distributae opera D. Petri Canisii Theologi.* Lyon: Jean Hugetan, 1592.
- D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae, & in libros tres distributae opera D. Petri Canisii Theologi. Nunc primum ad exemplar Mariani Victorii Reatini, Episcopi Amerini, emendatae, argumentisque illustratae.* Louvain: Philippus Sangrius, 1596.
- Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis, Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae Presbyteri Cardinalis epistolae in tres libros distributae.* Cologne: Wilhelm Friessem, 1674.
- D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae, & in libros tres distributae opera D. Petri Canisii Theologi. Nunc primum ad exemplar Mariani Victorii Reatini, Episcopi Amerini, emendatae, argumentisque illustratae.* Lyon: Antoine Beaujollin, 1687.
- Sancti Hieronymi Stridoniensis epistolae selectae juxta editionem D. Petri Canisi, necnon ad exemplar D. Martianay S. Benedicti monachi.* Paris and Lyon: Librairie catholique de Perisse frères, 1845.

Editions by Mariano Vittori

- Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos.* 3 vols. Rome: Paolo Manuzio, 1564-1565.
- Epistolae D. Hieronymi Stridonensis et libri contra haereticos.* 4 vols. Rome: Paolo Manuzio, 1566.
- D. Hieronymi Stridoniensis opera omnia.* 9 vols. Rome: In aedibus populi Romani, 1571-1576.
- Opera divi Hieronymi Stridoniensis, doctoris ecclesiae.* 9 vols. Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1578-1579.

- Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae reperiri potuerunt.* 9 vols. Paris: Sébastien Nivelle, 1578-1579.
- Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae reperiri potuerunt.* 9 vols. Paris: Sébastien Nivelle, 1602.
- Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae reperiri potuerunt.* 4 vols. Paris: Apud Bibliopolas urbis Parisiensis Consortes, 1609.
- Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae extant.* 9 vols. Cologne: Antonius Hierat, 1616.
- Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae extant.* 4 vols. Paris: Apud Bibliopolas urbis Parisiensis Consortes, 1623.
- Sancti Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia quae extant.* 9 vols. Paris: Cramoisy, 1643.

Other early modern printed editions of Jerome or Pseudo-Jerome by year of publication

- Epistolae Sancti Hieronymi.* Venice: Dominus Pincius, [after 1500].
- Les Epistres Saint Hierosme.* Edited by Antoine du Four. Paris: n.d.
- Beatissimi Hieronimi de honorandis parentibus Epistola.* Leipzig: Jacob Thanner, 1504.
- Beatissimi Hieronimi de muliere sepcies [sic] percussa Epistola.* Leipzig: Jacob Thanner, 1504.
- Aepistolae [sic] Sancti Hieronymi.* Lyon: Jacques Saccon, 1508.
- Septem divi Hieronymi epistolae ad vitam mortalium instituendam accommodatissime [sic].* Edited by Johannes Rhagius Aesticampianus. Leipzig: Melchior Lotter, 1508.
- Beatissimi Hieronimi de honorandis parentibus Epistola.* Leipzig: Jacob Thanner, 1509.
- Epistolarum divi Hieronymi...codicili tres.* Paris: Poncet le Preux, 1512.
- Epistolae sancti Hieronymi.* Lyon: Nicolas de Benedictis, 1513.
- Quattuor divi Hieronymi epistole ad vitam mortalium instituendam accommodatissime at mira scatenes eruditione hoc contentur libello.* Leipzig: Jacob Thanner, 1514.
- Aliquot familiares epistolae beati Hieronimi presbiteri cardinalis sanctae matris ecclesiae praestantissimi.* Antwerp: Willem Vorsterman, 1515.
- Quae hoc libello habentur: Divi Hieronymi epistola ad magnum urbis Oratorem elegantiss[ima]. Eiusdem ad Athletam de filiae educatione. F. Philelphi epistola de Hieronymo & Augustino.* Edited by Johann Lang. Wittenberg: Johannes Grunenberg, 1515.
- Quattuor divi Hieronymi epistole ad vitam mortalium instituendam accommodatissime at mira scatenes eruditione hoc contentur libello.* Leipzig: Jacob Thanner, 1515.
- Divi Hieronymi contra Iovinianum hereticum libri duo, cum Apologetico eiusdem in defensionem librorum contra praedicutn Iovinianum.* Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1516.
- Decem Divi Hieronymi epistolae ad vitam mortalium instituendam accommodatissimae [sic].* Edited by Heinrich Stackmann. Wittenberg: Johann Grunenberg, 1517.
- Epistole sancti Hieronymi.* Lyon: Jacques Saccon, 1518.
- Les epistres saint Jerosme.* Edited by Antoine du Four. Paris: Jean de la Garde, 1518.
- Quattuor divi Hieronymi epistole ad vitam mortalium instituendam accommodatissime at mira scatenes eruditione hoc contentur libello.* Leipzig: Jacob Thanner, 1518.
- Contenta in hoc libello. Insunt aliquot Divi Hieronymi selectiores ac breviores epistolae, mira eruditione refertae, pro instituendis sanctis moribus, ac vita Christiana, non modo iuventuti, verum & proveciori aetati accommodae.* Edited by Albuin Grefinger. Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1520.
- Divi Hieronymi, ter maximi Christianae ecclesiae magistri, protreptica epistola ac paraenetica epistola ad Paulinum.* Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1520.
- Epistolas de S. Hieronymo.* Valencia: Joan Joffre, 1520.
- Les Epistres monseigneur saint Hierosme en françois.* Paris: Guillaume Eustace, 1520.

- Inest huic libello homilia Divi Hieronymi de filio prodigio ad Damasum papam oppido quam eleganti stilo conscripta & multivaria eruditione referta.* Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1521.
- Quattuor divi Hieronymi epistole ad vitam mortalium instituendam accommodatissime at mirascentes eruditione hoc contentur libello.* Leipzig: Jacob Thanner, 1521.
- Divi Hieronymi Libellus, de optime genere interpretandi, Ad Pammachium.* Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1523.
- Divi Hieronymi ter maximi Christianae religionis Magistri, Prologi tres.* Vienna: Joannes Singrenius, 1523.
- Epistolas de S. Hieronymo.* Valencia: Jorge Costilla Acabose, 1526.
- Epistolas del glorioso Doctor sant Hieronymo.* Seville: Juan Varela de Salamanca, 1532.
- Divi Hieronymi epistolae aliquot, Argumentis, & Scholijs illustratae, ad maiorem studiosorum utilitatem selectae.* Antwerp: Willem Vorsterman, 1533.
- Epistolas del glorioso Doctor sant Hieronymo.* Seville: Juan Cromberger, 1537.
- Epistola Sancti Hieronymi ad Evagrium de potestate papae.* Edited by Martin Luther. Wittenberg: Nicolaus Schirlentz, 1538.
- Epistolas del glorioso Doctor sant Hieronymo.* Seville: Juan Cromberger, 1541.
- Epistole di S. Girolamo, dottore della chiesa.* Translated by Giovan Francesco Zeffi. Venice: Lucantonio Giunta, 1562.
- Epistolarum D. Hieronymi prima decas.* Edited by Johannes Antonianus. Antwerp: Willem Silvius, 1568.
- Divi Hieronymi Stridonensis epistolae aliquot selectae, in usum gymnasiorum ubi Latina lingua docetur, ut habeant adolescentes unde eloquentiam simul & pietatem hauriant.* Edited by Juan Corduba. Salamanca: Matías Gast, 1572.
- Confessio Hieronymiana, ex omnibus germanis B. Hieronymi operibus optima fide collecta, et per locorum theologicorum capita, perspicua methodo, in quatuor tomos distributa.* Edited by Cornelius Schulting. Cologne: Birckmann, 1585.
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- Épîtres familières de Saint Hierosme, divisées en trois livres.* Translated by Jean de Lavardin. Rouen: Romain de Beauvais, 1608.
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